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THE TIMES OF INDIA

INCLUDES 4 PAGES OF BANGALORE TIMES AND *10 PAGES OF EDUCATION TIMES (*CITY AREAS ONLY)

INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio to travel to Rome later this week. Proposed visit comes after Italian PM Giorgia Meloni and President Donald Trump clashed over Iran war and her defence of Pope Leo XIV, P 12

Two US service members taking part in an exercise in southern Morocco have gone missing, military authorities from both countries say. A search is currently under way, P 12

Barcelona move to brink of La Liga title with tense 2-1 win away to Osasuna as Lewandowski and Torres score late. Now 14 points ahead of rival Real Madrid, P 14

Zelensky-led Ukraine says it has hit several Russian ships — a cruise missile carrier and 3 shadow fleet tankers — as both sides rain drones in a spree that killed at least five people, P 12

Nepal objects to move to resume Kailash yatra

The new Nepal govt has objected to India's decision to resume Kailash Mansarovar Yatra — with support from China — through Uttarakhand state crossing at Lipulekh Pass that is claimed by Kathmandu. **India later dismissed Nepal's territorial claims**, saying it has consistently maintained such claims are neither justified nor based on historical facts. P 5

ANI

An IAF helicopter rescued two teenagers stranded on a water tank in Lucknow's Siddharth Nagar, nearly 15 hours after its dilapidated ladder collapsed. Five boys had climbed the tank on Saturday when the ladder gave way, killing a 13-year-old boy and injuring 2 others | P 9

Abandoned 2-yr-old walks through forest for 20 hrs, survives

A two-year-old boy walked nearly 20 hours alone through a Madhya Pradesh forest after his father allegedly killed his mother and abandoned him. Barefoot, hungry and dehydrated, he survived dangerous terrain before police found him. The father was arrested, and the child—sole eyewitness to the murder—was stabilised. P 8

RWH fails to save 90% run-off water

Last week's downpour delivered 20 million cubic metres of rain, but only a fraction of it recharged the groundwater. Remaining 90% ran off through drains and sealed surfaces, according to experts. Fifteen years after rainwater harvesting (RWH) became mandatory for buildings, city loses far more water than it saves. P 3

2 night-beat cops assaulted by 4 men

Four men allegedly consuming alcohol in their SUV in Dasarahalli assaulted two night-patrol cops when they asked them to wind up the party and move out. They allegedly kicked & punched the cops, besides tearing up their uniform and snatching bike keys. P 3

₹8.7K/school kit for workers' kids in state

The labour department, through Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board, has decided to provide school kits worth Rs 8,736 or more to children of registered construction workers across the state. P 4

Fire scare at event: DKS copter grounded

A fire broke out near the stage at a programme attended by DCM DK Shivakumar, and his helicopter was briefly grounded as staff conducted a safety inspection leading to tense moments in Raichur district. P 4

Sapling shortage cuts into green drive

After planting 10 crore saplings over the past two monsoons, state govt has scaled down its afforestation target this year, citing a shortage of quality planting stock in forest nurseries. P 4

B'luru man, son suffer burns over bike fight

An 18-year-old and his 45-year-old father suffered burns after a row over taking the bike without permission escalated to such an extent that the father tried to set his son on fire in Bengaluru. P 3

Iran proposes 30-day plan to end war, says it's got US reply

Sent Via Pak; No Confirmation From Washington

Iran late Sunday said it had received the United States response to its 14-point proposal, sent via Pakistan, that called for issues between the two countries to be resolved within 30 days and aimed to end the war rather than extend the ceasefire.

FULL COVERAGE: P 12

Iranian state media reported that Washington had conveyed its response to Iran's proposal via Pakistan and that Tehran was now reviewing it.

"At this stage, we do not have nuclear negotiations," state media quoted Iran's foreign ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei as saying, an apparent reference to Iran's proposal to set aside talks on nuclear issues until after the war ends and the parties agree to lift opposing blockades of Gulf shipping.

There was no immediate confirmation from either Washington or Islamabad of the US response. Iran's 14-point proposal called for the US lifting sanctions, ending its naval blockade of Iranian ports, withdrawing forces from the region and ceasing all hostilities, including Israel's operations in Lebanon, say officials.

Earlier, US President Donald Trump said he was reviewing the proposal but doubted it would lead to a deal, adding on social media "they (Iran) have not yet paid a big enough price for what they have done to Humanity, and the World, over the last 47 years" since the Islamic Revolution there. Meanwhile, a cargo ship near the Strait of Hormuz was attacked by multiple small craft.

The US and Israel suspended their bombing campaign against Iran four weeks ago, and US and Iranian officials held one round of talks. But attempts to set up further meetings have failed so far. AGENCIES

RELIEF AS UAE RESUMES AIRLINE OPS

- UAE announces full resumption of air navigation ops in its airspace and lifting of precautionary measures. **Indian and UAE carriers have begun operating more flights from Emirates to various Indian destinations,** says MEA
- **Saudi Arabia, Russia and five other OPEC+ countries increase their oil production quota,** in an expected move aimed at demonstrating continuity at the cartel after the shock withdrawal of UAE
- **Continuing Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon kill at least one person** and wound four rescuers, Lebanese health ministry says
- **US goes ahead with radar upgrade for Pak's F16s,** a move that will raise India's concerns; 2nd upgrade after $686m package in Dec

US goes ahead with radar upgrade for Pakistan's F-16 fleet

The US has awarded Northrop Grumman Systems Corp a $488 million contract to upgrade F-16 radar systems for Pakistan under the US Air Force programme. The move, amid regional tensions following India's Operation Sindoor in Pakistan and reduced strength of Indian Air Force's aircraft squadron, raises security concerns. P 12

OPEC+ hikes June oil output quota, stays mum on UAE pull-out

In Vienna, OPEC+ raised June oil output quotas by 188,000bpd while staying silent on the United Arab Emirates exit, signalling stability. Led by Saudi Arabia and Russia, OPEC+ members' move downplays tensions, though actual supply gains remain limited due to the war & Strait of Hormuz constraints. P 12

I am one of Brij Bhushan's six victims, says Vinesh

Sabi.Hussain
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Wrestler Vinesh Phogat on Sunday disclosed that she is one of the six female wrestlers who had accused former Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh of sexual harassment.

The announcement comes just days before her return at a ranking tournament in Brij Bhushan's stronghold Gonda, marking her first appearance in nearly 20 months after coming out of retirement in Dec last year.

Vinesh, a two-time World Championships medallist and three-time Olympian, had earlier not publicly identified herself, citing ongoing legal proceedings. In a 4-minute, 22-second Instagram video, she said "certain circumstances" compelled her to speak out despite the matter being sub judice.

"The Supreme Court guidelines say that the identity of any victim should not be revealed … but today, due to certain circumstances, I want to tell you something," said Vinesh, "I myself am one of those six victims who filed a complaint, and our testimonies are still ongoing."

Vinesh has also raised serious concerns about the upcoming competition's fairness and venue, alleging that it is being held in Brij Bhushan's bastion and at an institution linked to him.

"For a woman, competing in such a situation is very difficult," she said. "He has his own private college, and this competition is being organised there… it is almost impossible that every hard working athlete will get their due."

WFI president Sanjay Singh said the venue for the National Open Ranking Tournament in Gonda would not be changed and offered a "personal guarantee" for her safety.

Vinesh is now also a legislator, having won the Julana seat in Haryana on a Congress ticket in 2024.

Urging transparency about the venue, she said: "If any untoward incident happens to me, my team or supporters, the Indian govt will be responsible".

She alleged officiating and scoring could be influenced by those loyal to Singh.

▶'Silent spectator', P 6

> **Who will referee whose match, how many points a referee will give…all of these will be controlled by Brij Bhushan and his people** (in Gonda). Govt and our sports ministry are watching this as silent spectators
>
> **If any untoward incident happens to me,** my team or supporters, the Indian govt will be responsible
>
> —Vinesh Phogat

> **If Vinesh Phogat is worried about her safety, let me assure her that I am taking personal guarantee of that.** Also, we have UWW-approved referees who officiate and all trial bouts are recorded, so there is no chance of any bias
>
> —WFI president Sanjay Singh

5 of family among 9 dead in Delhi bldg fire; AC unit blast likely trigger

Abhay, Devanshi Mehta & Khushi Bhuta | TNN

New Delhi: A devastating fire tore through a residential building in east Delhi's Vivek Vihar in the early hours of Sunday, claiming the lives of nine people and prompting a massive response from 14 fire tenders and over 100 firefighters and police personnel. While some residents were rescued through balconies and by cutting open rear grills, others jumped from upper floors in desperate attempts to save themselves as the fire spread rapidly.

▶Neighbours' quick thinking saved many lives, P 5

Initial investigation suggested that the blaze, reported to police around 3.48am at property B-13, Phase I, may have been triggered by an air-conditioner (AC) explosion.

Credit: Anushka Kogta, PTI

It took four to five hours of intense effort to bring the inferno under control and the nine charred bodies were discovered by recovery teams during a subsequent search of the building.

The first victim, identified as Shikha Jain (45), was found on the second floor.

▶Delay in response, P 5

Victim's kin grieve at GTB Hospital Sunday after a massive fire in a four-storey complex snuffed out 9 lives — the oldest among them 60, and the youngest an 18-month-old

'Bhaiya, bacha lo': Last call as flames spread

As the deadly fire spread rapidly at his home around 3.45am, Nishank Jain desperately called his brother, pleading: "Bhaiya, bacha lo". His call ended abruptly, and he, his wife, their 18-month-old son, and parents were charred to death before help arrived. P 5

'Nauseated' flyer jumps off taxiing plane in Chennai

Chennai: A passenger (29) experiencing nausea opened the emergency exit of an Air Arabia flight that was still taxiing after touchdown in Chennai and jumped onto the tarmac. It triggered an emergency, which shut the runway and led to an incoming British Airways flight being diverted to Bengaluru.

The Sharjah-Chennai flight with 240 passengers was heading to the apron when Mohamed Sherif Mohamed Najumudeen opened the emergency window and jumped, officials said. The captain alerted air traffic control and the plane was "disabled" on the taxiway. As he tried to flee, CISF personnel gave chase and caught him. He told them he opened the emergency exit because he was nauseated. TNN

▶Flight diverted, P 8

Sringeri cliffhanger on postal votes continues; all eyes on EC

Ranjith Kandya | TNN

Chikkamagaluru: Three years after a photo finish in Sringeri assembly polls saw Congress carving out a slim win, battle over postal ballots — a key factor, given the narrow margin of victory — continues. Hours after Congress claimed lead in the court-ordered recount, BJP Sunday said it's leading the vote race in the cliffhanger of a fight.

Congress has renewed its legal challenge again, adding more suspense to claims and counterclaims. Outcome of the recount has been sent to the Election Commission in an envelope. The EC will later submit the envelope to Karnataka high court.

In the 2023 assembly polls, TD Rajegowda of Congress won the seat in Chikkamagaluru district by a margin of 201 votes. Defeated BJP candidate DN Jeevaraj challenged it in court, with the recount process focused on 1,822 postal ballots. Returning officer Gaurav Shetty said results of postal ballot recount have been sent to EC in an envelope as per a Karnataka high court directive. The recount started on Saturday morning and ended by 1am on Sunday.

Of the postal ballots, 279 of them had been rejected. Initially, these were reverified and recounted. Later, the remaining valid votes were also recounted. With BJP state president BY Vijayendra making big claims, deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar alleged electoral fraud with postal ballots.

▶Ballots tampered, P 4

> I don't know why there is a delay in declaring the winner. Truth has come out now: Whether it's ballot papers or EVM, people have lost hope in Congress
>
> — BY Vijayendra | KARNATAKA BJP PRESIDENT

> Recount was a systematic crime and a big conspiracy…
>
> — DK Shivakumar | DY CHIEF MINISTER & KPCC CHIEF

Cong stopped BJP's winning streak in '23

BJP's D N Jeevaraj represented Sringeri segment, which spans Sringeri, Koppa and Narasimharajapura taluks in the core Malnad region of Chikkamagaluru district, in 2004, 2008, 2013 and 2018. Jeevaraj's winning streak was broken by T D Rajegowda of Congress in the 2023 elections. TNN

SIR a 'threat' to jobs: Teachers, govt officials move HC as names deleted

Srishti.Lakhotia
@timesofindia.com

Kolkata: A central govt officer holding a senior position in a PSU, an assistant teacher in a govt school, a medical professional preparing for a national entrance exam and an insurance agent whose licence hinges on his voter status – all moved Calcutta high court last week over their livelihoods being on the line after their names were deleted from Bengal's electoral rolls during SIR.

Justice Krishna Rao told their lawyers that the petitions would be heard at a later date, offering no relief before the election or, in the doctor's case, before his exam.

Special Intensive Revision (SIR) deletions have stripped 27 lakh people in West Bengal of their voting rights. The four pending petitions now highlight a dimension that goes beyond disenfranchisement.

The petitioners argue that for employees and licensed professionals, removal from the electoral rolls effectively raises questions about their citizenship, which could lead to departmental action, termination from service and even licence cancellation. One of them has been in service at a PSU for over a decade.

▶May hit careers, P 8

Security personnel outside a strongroom in Kolkata Sunday

Change or not? All eyes on results today

BJP is looking to take down the opposition in its few strongholds in Bengal, while its rivals hope to hold their line in their redoubts in eastern and southern India, with the results to Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Kerala and Puducherry set to offer a peek into the broader political mood of the nation today. The results may have serious repercussions for the opposition INDIA bloc. P 5

3 from Kerala die as carrier rams car in C'nagar

Mysuru: Three persons, including a toddler, died and three others, including a pregnant woman, suffered injuries when a goods carrier rammed their car in Muddayyanahundi village, **reports Shrinivasa M.**

The accident took place near the Karnataka-Kerala border, under Gundlupet police limits, around 7.30am on Sunday

According to police officers, the car was on its way to Bengaluru from Kerala, while the goods carrier with manure was headed to Kerala from Mandya.

The deceased have been identified as Muneer, 38, who was at the wheel; Muneera, 45; and Moheej, three and a half years old.

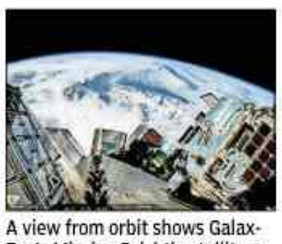
▶Triggers protest, P 6

Indian co's satellite sees through clouds and in the dark too

Chethan.Kumar
@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: When Bengaluru-based space startup GalaxEye placed its first commercial satellite Drishti in orbit aboard SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket on Sunday, it marked more than just another launch for India's private space sector.

Drishti — called India's largest privately developed Earth observation satellite and the world's first OptoSAR satellite — added a rare new capability to the country's observation fleet: A satellite that can "see" through clouds, darkness and bad weather while capturing conventional optical imagery.



A view from orbit shows GalaxEye's Mission Drishti satellite as it separates after launch aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket Sunday

GalaxEye co-founder and CEO Suyash Singh told **TOI**: "This will become only the 16th remote sensing satellite available to India, placing it among a small group of spacecraft."

▶Advanced capabilities, P 9

Abetment case filed in Delhi judge's death

New Delhi: A day after a 30-year-old judge allegedly died by suicide at his residence in south Delhi's Green Park, police registered a case of abetment on Sunday following a complaint from his father alleging harassment by the in-laws. Police were tight-lipped on whether anyone was named in the FIR.

The deceased, Aman Sharma, was secretary of District Legal Services Authority, North East District, at Karkardooma courts. Police said Sharma's relative contacted police around 1.45pm on Saturday to report that the judge had locked himself in the bathroom.

A case of abetment and criminal conspiracy under BNS sections has been registered at Safdarjung Enclave police station. TNN

SG Mehta takes swipe at 'bully' judges in his book

Dhananjay.Mahapatra
@timesofindia.com

Extraordinary courtroom reverence shown worldwide by lawyers to judges has afflicted some judges with a false sense of divinity, turning a few 'My Lords' into bullies, senior advocate and solicitor general Tushar Mehta says in his upcoming book, in a sarcastic take that may raise sensitive hackles on the bench.

Mehta has compiled incidents from foreign courtrooms to illustrate his "bullies on the bench" theme that could hold a mirror to Indian judiciary. In 'The Bench, the Bar and the Bizarre', he writes, "Some judges interrupt counsel incessantly, while others cross the line from firmness to humiliation".

▶Highest standards, P 8

> **When a judge becomes arrogant, abusive, interruptive or intolerant during arguments, it is not a contest between equals.** The lawyer's options are few and unpalatable… It is usually left to a brave litigant, rather than counsel, to draw the attention of the higher body to such judicial behaviour
>
> –SG Tushar Mehta

Raj-origin LN Mittal, Poonawalla seal $1.65bn takeover of Royals

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Jaipur: The Mittal Family and Adar Poonawalla have inked a definitive deal to acquire Rajasthan Royals for approximately $1.65 billion (over Rs 15,660 crore). The transaction, led by steel magnates Lakshmi N Mittal and Aditya Mittal, involves the purchase of the franchise from Manoj Badale and his consortium. The deal, expected to close in the third quarter of 2026, marks a return to roots for Lakshmi Mittal, who was born and raised in Sadulpur village in Rajasthan's Churu district.

"I love cricket and my family is from Rajasthan, so there is no IPL team I would rather be part of than Rajasthan Royals," Lakshmi Mittal said in a statement released by the Jaipur-based franchise.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Mittal family will secure a majority 75% stake in the IPL team. Poonawalla is set to hold 18%, while the remaining 7% will be maintained by a group of existing investors, including Manoj Badale.

▶Badale to join, P 13

KAL SOMANI BID FELL THROUGH

- Before Mittal-Poonawalla (pic) bid, in March, consortium led by Kal Somani made $1.63bn offer. It **failed to raise capital, and together with regulatory uncertainties** and complexities within consortium structure, the bid fell through
- Currently, the **Royals franchise is held by Manoj Badale's Emerging Media Ventures** (65%), RedBird Capital Partners (15%), and Fox Corporation's Lachlan Murdoch among minority investors
- Mittal-Poonawalla deal covers Rajasthan Royals men's franchise along with sister teams **Paarl Royals and Barbados Royals**

May 8: Tata Trusts to review Tata Sons nominee directors

Reeba.Zachariah
@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: The boardrooms of India's most powerful philanthropic trusts are looking at an uncomfortable May 8 reckoning. The Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT) and Sir Ratan Tata Trust (SRTT), which together hold 52% controlling stake in Tata Sons, will convene to review their nominee directors on the holding company's board, among other agenda items.

The two sitting nominees on Tata Sons are Noel Tata and Venu Srinivasan, who serve as chairman and vice chairman respectively of both trusts. Their predecessor as nominee, Vijay Singh, also vice chairman of SDTT and SRTT, was pushed out last Sept after non-nominee directors blocked his reappointment under an internal rule that trustees reaching 75 should face review.

▶Rift deepens, P 11

Air India CEO race narrows to final 4

The race for Air India CEO's position has entered its final stage with the selection narrowing down to four names, including AI chief commercial officer Nipun Aggarwal, erstwhile Vistara CEO Vinod Kannan, who is now senior vice president at Singapore Airlines (SIA). P 11

Bangalore Times
'I'm actually a product of reverse nepotism'
Festive at Favela! Ft Shakira
Buzzstop
SALMAN KHAN'S BODYGUARD TESTIFIES IN FIRING CASE AT ACTOR'S RESIDENCE
Court dismisses the bail plea of 9 accused
deerhi
Landscapes that feel alive
Sacred Kamana
Ranikhet - Binsar - Jageshwar
Blossoms of the Nights
Ooty - Coonoor
Enter the threshold of the exceptional

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Education TIMES

THE PATH TO EXCELLENCE

CUET UG drops internal choice, pushing students to cover the full syllabus

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The days of freeloading on café tables for work – or table camping – are over in Bengaluru. Hustlers are now being asked to pay to work from cafés, and to stay away on weekends, report ***Kshama Bhat & Aaditya Tandon***

Photo: AI

> I do miss the older, more informal Bengaluru café culture, which was raw and organic. But I also understand that cities evolve and spaces need to adapt. I think the best outcome would be keeping that old warmth while still adjusting to modern needs, instead of becoming too commercial or too work-oriented
>
> **Divyanshi Bundela** | LAW STUDENT

BENGALURU CAFÉS ASK table campers to pay

There was a time when a café in Bengaluru meant something simple and unhurried. There was no required agenda to be there. Then came the IT boom, which also saw the rise of coffee chains that blended more brews and ambiance into the city's coffee culture. Soon, laptops started appearing on tables, and cafés became important meeting points. A tipping point, however, came about in the mid-2010s, after the city got swept up by the startup wave. It completely morphed cafés from being a social space to a workspace.

In areas like Koramangala, Indiranagar, or HSR Layout, cafés started to function like a 'third place,' where you could order something and work uninterrupted all day. Freelancers, startup founders and remote employees claimed corner seats with laptops propped up on their tables.

> If they have a person hoarding a seat for hours on end, they might as well profit from it
>
> **Aastha Soni** | MBA STUDENT

Things are changing again—chances are likely you recently walked into a café in Vijaya Bank Layout or Indiranagar, ordered food, and opened your work laptop when, lo, a staffer politely informed you that you must pay first to work from their premises.

Several cafés across the city are now trying to redraw the blurred lines between work hours and personal/social time spent on their premium real estate, by charging a price.

Pay for weekday; ban on weekend

"A café at 5pm on a Wednesday used to be a space you went to for conversation, to be around people, and not really to produce something. Now a café is almost an extension of your workflow," says Sejal Sahni, 26, who works as a corporate development manager.

Where the only expectation used to be that you order something, cafés are now putting systems in place such as reservation apps, adjusted bills, shared tables and weekend restrictions. They aren't turning laptop users away — what was once informal and meant for everyone who needed to just relax is now, increasingly, structured and monetised.

A popular café in Koramangala is now a combined workspace with a rider — no work-from-café during weekends. On weekdays, there's a system in place using the app myHQ, primarily a co-working and meeting room booking platform that doubles as the café's reservation gateway for laptop users. To work here, you pay Rs 300 through the app in advance, which is then adjusted against your food order: so if you spend Rs 500 on food, you only pay the remaining Rs 200 at the counter. Skip the booking, and you lose your right to work there entirely.

HOW CAFÉS BILL*
Coworking spaces 9am-9pm - ₹400-₹799
Cafés: 8am-8pm - ₹250-₹400
*Per day

Another café in Indiranagar lets you work during weekends but you cannot expect a table to yourself. The café offers only a shared table during these hours, according to Tom Matthew, the manager there.

A win-win for cafés

The booking price of a table at these cafés does not differ all that much from the rates charged by workspaces exclusively made for office-use. The difference, perhaps, is in how they personify. "A café should have personality, comfort and a social energy. A coworking space is more purpose-driven and built for efficiency," says Divyanshi Bundela, a 22 year-old law student living in Bengaluru.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WORK FROM CAFÉ

People have been "working from cafés" for over 300 years

- In the 1600s, coffeehouses in cities like London, Paris & Vienna became hubs for thinkers, writers and merchants
- Throughout the 1900s, cafés remained popular with journalists and artists
- In the late 1990s & early 2000s, chains like Starbucks began offering wifi, turning cafés into informal offices

For the cafés themselves, the new model is proving to be a smart business decision. "The business model of reservation for working within the café is very profitable," says Kaveramma AG, a 30-year-old store manager at a popular café. "If they pay for the table but order nothing, it's still revenue," she explains.

For bigger establishments, the reservation model is a clean profit machine, but for smaller, independent cafés, it's a balancing act between being known among more people and also making sure to stay on top of things and make a profit. "On weekdays it is profitable because we will be getting more discoverability on reservation platforms like Google, MagicPay, Zomato, and Swiggy, but on weekends it becomes difficult for small format outlets like us to manage reservations. So it's walk-in on weekends," says Vineet Nelakuduru, founder of a popular chain.

More cafés are turning into workspaces and taking on the identity of a 'third-place' as there is a decline in revenue due to an expensive menu or dwindling footfall. Sejal fears that the moment a café introduces time-based pricing, it becomes transactional. "You're no longer a guest, you're a customer with a meter running."

Rise of the 'third-place'

But is this all just a Bengaluru thing? Not really. What's happening in the city's cafés is part of a wider global shift. Cafés around the world are rapidly evolving into multi-functional hubs, with the business model shifting from "quick caffeine" to "extended stay," say various global reports.

In New York, a coffee shop made headlines after it began charging customers a daily membership fee simply to use their laptops, on top of the cost of their drink. The debate that followed online was remarkably familiar where a café manager explained that "people take up space for hours and only buy a couple of things" and that cafés simply "can't afford rent" otherwise.

The shift is also rooted in broader workplace changes. Research by McKinsey shows hybrid work is now entrenched globally, with office attendance still about 30% below pre-pandemic levels.

> I'd be pretty annoyed if all the (café) space is taken up by people who shack up for hrs
>
> **Aadya Pandit** | STUDENT

Chetan.Krishna@timesofindia.com

An ode to Kannada's first great poet

Bengaluru shed its anglicised name 'Bangalore' on Nov 1, 2014. The push to rename the city's streets after personalities, who reflect either regional or national history or heritage, has been active since Independence.

It is said that during the colonial rule there has been a distinct pattern in the way the streets were named in the city. The British reportedly named the streets in the Cantonment area after their senior military leaders and viceroys, while the roads in Bengaluru's pete areas were named after members of the Mysuru royal family.

STREET VIEW

But there are a few exceptions. The stretch between Basavanagudi National College and Minto Junction, now called Pampa Mahakavi Road, was named after Charles Hardinge, who was the viceroy of India from 1910 to 1916. (Hardinge had survived an assassination bid by Indian revolutionaries in 1912. The previous year, he oversaw the Delhi Darbar during the visit of King George V and the shift of India's capital from the then Calcutta to New Delhi.)

Pampa Mahakavi Road is a tree lined wide stretch with several notable landmarks. Some of the notable ones are Kannada Sahitya Parishat building, CSI St Luke's Church, Minto Eye Hospital and Uttaradi Mutt in Shankarapuram.

Pampa (CE 902-975), considered one of the greatest poets of Kannada, is also the first great poet in the language. Pampa had great prowess in both prose and verse. His talent eventually led him to becoming the court poet of Chalukya king Arikesari II.

His two major works are Adi Purana and Vikramarjuna Vijaya, a Kannada reiteration of the Mahabharata. Pampa is credited with bringing Classicism, and Jain and Hindu mythology to Kannada literature.

When the city heads were planning to rename some streets in Bengaluru, renaming the stretch that houses the Kannada Sahitya Parishat after Pampa would have been an easy and obvious choice.

Kannada Sahitya Parishat was established in 1915 as Karnataka Sahity Parishat by the then Mysuru king Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar and was renamed as Kannada Sahitya Parishat in 1935.

St Luke's Church on Pampa Mahakavi Road was also inaugurated in 1935. Its story ties to that of Bengaluru's first church. After the British defeated Tipu Sultan in the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War in 1799, they established a small chapel inside the fort in Bengaluru. The chapel was shifted outside the fort and was named the Fort Church. When the Mysore govt proposed to build the Vani Vilas Hospital next to the fort, the church was seen to be in the way. The govt then allotted land, where the church now stands, after taking over the Fort Church.

A couple of hundred metres from the church is Tipu's summer palace and the Kote Venkataramanaswamy temple.

Minto Eye Hospital in Bengaluru is one of the earliest specialty eye hospitals in India. Established in 1896 in Chickpete, it was shifted to its current location on Pampa Mahakavi road in 1913.

BEST OF OORU

ROOPA PAI

Until my mid-thirties, I had little or no idea of my hometown's history. I had always felt deeply connected with Bengaluru, the way most people do with the place they were born and raised in, and had missed it achingly whenever I had lived away from it, but the urge to understand what made it unique only came upon me when I returned for good. I have several favourite places in Bengaluru, but these are three I would recommend to anyone who wants to experience the 'Bangalore vibe' while also getting a dose of history.

PANCHALINGESHWARA TEMPLE COMPLEX, BEGUR | A most important pilgrimage site for anyone interested in the origin story of the city, this beautiful 9th century temple complex lies at the heart of the ancient village of Begur, 4 km off the highway that leads to Electronics City (which, while being Begur's chronological opposite, is just as Bengalurean in spirit). While the casual visitor to the complex is afforded a bird's eye view of the different dynasties that held sway over this neck of the woods – the two earliest shrines here are attributed to the Ganga kings, the others to the 11th century Cholas – the piece de resistance is a 890 CE veeragallu, or 'hero stone', that was discovered in 1915 by R Narasimhachar of the Mysore Archaeology Department. Like most hero stones, this one too memorialises a battle, in a place called... Bengaluru! This is the oldest recorded mention of Bengaluru, and predates the founding of Kempegowda's city by over 500 years! Goosebumps!

CUBBON PARK | Located at the geographical centre of the city, the 156-year-old, 197-acre public park is also Bengaluru's emotional heart. To many who grew up in the city in the 70s & 80s, the park is inextricably linked to memories of an idyllic 'Bangalore childhood' — family picnics, painting competitions on the lawns of Bal Bhavan, merry-go-rounds, cotton candy, and weekend rides on the Putaani Express toy train. But Cubbon Park also contains a huge part of the history of Bengaluru-Bangalore — at the behest of Lord Bowring, Commissioner of Bangalore (1861-1870), the Park was laid out by Col Richard Sankey to enhance the majesty of the New Administrative Offices (today the HC of Karnataka) that he had designed, and named after Bowring's predecessor, the much-loved Sir Mark Cubbon. Today, Cubbon Park is where the city — and its pet dogs — heads on weekends, to run, skate, cycle, play frisbee, do yoga, read, sing, paint, picnic, catch up with friends, watch a classical dance performance at the Bandstand, or just stroll under the sprawling canopy of its magnificent trees, marvelling at how well this city has managed to preserve, mostly via citizen action, such a priceless green resource at its centre.

CHURCH STREET | If there was a stretch of road that epitomised the spirit of Bengaluru, it is probably this one, named for the church it leads to — St Mark's Cathedral, which was the first church to come up in the British cantonment in 1808. Whether it is the many al fresco streetside cafes and beer balconies where one can shoot the breeze while enjoying the city's beautiful year-round weather; the iconic second-hand bookstores where both serious aficionado and casual reader are sure to find enough to engage and entertain them for hours; or the big-city buzz of neon lights, beautiful young people and instagrammable backgrounds that still manages to create, in typical Bengaluru fashion, a gentle, intimate and laid-back vibe, Church Street delivers in spades. And should you wish to end the evening drowning in old Bangalore nostalgia, you could always head towards the St Mark's Road end of the street, and take your pick from a benne masaal dose at the Chalukya Samrat Café, luchi-aloo and rasgulla at KC Das, or mutton cutlets at Koshy's.

Roopa Pai is a Bengaluru-based author

TIMES CITY

Pics: Chethan Shivakumar

Residents reclaim streets to UNWIND & CONNECT

Sanjay.Murty@timesofindia.com

A festive buzz filled Nandini Layout Sunday morning as Happy Streets returned, turning the stretch near Oxford Secondary School into a lively, vehicle-free space for residents to unwind and connect.

Presented by Bhima Jewellers in Bengaluru, Happy Streets, a **Times of India** initiative kicked off early with a meditation session by Heartfulness, followed by yoga and pranayama led by Sarvebhavanthu Sukhinah Yoga. Soon after, the mood shifted as Swingers Dance Inc brought in high-energy zumba and fitness routines, drawing an enthusiastic crowd.

BHIMA presents HAPPY streets — OUR ROADS. OUR WAY.

At the Bhima Jewellers stall, visitors paused for retro-themed photographs, receiving instant printouts while also taking part in a quiz and a lucky draw. The rhythmic beats of the traditional Chenda drums filled the air, adding a cultural touch and setting the mood for the vibrant street fest.

Interactive stalls like QShala piqued curiosity among children as they explored fun quizzes with their friends. Children picked up copies of the Preamble after getting it hand-printed at the Reclaim Constitution stall, which also displayed a copy of the Constitution.

A number of visitors tried their hand at Mudgar, the Indian heritage fitness tool demonstrated by NeeRav Arts, and explored Mandala art at the Prashree Art stall.

Creative corners also drew interest, with NS Kumbar Art Academy encouraging young artists and promoting the Chitrakar International Art Competition. Visitors explored Falun Dafa and got colourful sketches made on their hands at the hand-painting stall.

Young karate practitioners from Aryan Martial Arts demonstrated exceptional skills and shattered stacks of tiles with a single blow, much to the amazement of the visitors. Music and dance added to the energy, with performances by Mic & Melody, World Music Conservatory and From Mug to Mic. Dance groups including Jagan Jagz's Dance Studio and Twister Dance and Fitness Academy kept the momentum going.

VERY LIVELY MORNING Locals came together for a fun Sunday morning and participated in varied activities like dance, yoga, music, and fitness events at Happy Streets in Nandini Layout

Woman poisons 2 children, tries to kill herself

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A woman allegedly poisoned her two sons to death before attempting to take her own life in north Bengaluru following a family dispute.

Yeshwantpur police said Pavithra, 26, a homemaker from Pavagada in Tumakuru district, administered rat poison to Nivedh C, 4, and Nirmal C, 2, at HMT Layout in Mathikere late on Saturday night.

FAMILY DISPUTE

Based on preliminary investigation, police sources said Pavithra and her husband, Prashanth, a sales executive at an electronics store, had argued over a trivial issue earlier in the evening. Disturbed by the conflict, Prashanth left home for the while.

After poisoning the children, Pavithra is said to have consumed poison herself and gone to sleep in a separate room. Prashanth, who returned home at midnight, slept in the hall, unaware of the incident. Pavithra woke up in the early hours of Sunday and informed Prashanth about what had happened. Prashanth rushed all three to a hospital, where the doctors declared the kids brought dead.

BDA says it's not a promoter, prays HC for Rera exemption

Vindhya.Pabolu
@timesofindia.com

The authority has also sought a declaration that Rera provisions are not applicable to layouts where acquisition notifications were issued before May 1, 2017

Bengaluru: Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has filed a writ petition in the high court, with the filing dated April 27 and registered April 29, seeking clarity on the applicability of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016, to its residential layouts and schemes.

The petition has named Union of India, Karnataka govt, and Karnataka Real Estate Regulatory Authority (K-Rera) as respondents.

BDA has contended that it does not fall within the definition of "promoter" under Section 2(ZK) of the Act and therefore should not come under the jurisdiction of K-Rera. BDA has also sought a declaration that Rera provisions are not applicable to layouts where preliminary acquisition notifications were issued prior to May 1, 2017 — the date on which the Act came into force — and has sought interim relief to stay Rera's applicability to such projects until the matter is adjudicated.

Explaining the rationale behind the move, BDA officials told **TOI** that the authority's position is rooted in its distinct role as a public planning body. "BDA is not a real estate developer. We primarily create layouts to provide affordable housing for middle- and lower middle-income groups. If we stop doing this, illegal and unplanned layouts will mushroom across Bengaluru," an official said, stressing that most planned layouts in the city have historically been developed by the authority. The officials also underlined that BDA operates under a statutory framework of land acquisition through a legal process, unlike private developers.

A key contention raised in the petition is against retrospective application of the law. "Applying Rera to projects planned and notified before May 1, 2017, is not just impractical but also unfair and unjust. When these layouts were conceived — for instance, projects from around 2012 — there was no such law in place. Buyers entered into agreements knowing this. Imposing penalties now would mean burdening public funds, which is not justified," the official added.

The authority has also argued that any financial impact of Rera ultimately falls on public resources. It added that it functions transparently under the law, with revenues reinvested into the city.

Calling for a collaborative approach, the official said BDA is open to engaging with Rera to evolve a mechanism in public interest. Officials added that once interim relief is obtained from the high court, the authority would be open to structured discussions with Rera, and even a formal framework or agreement could be worked out to govern future projects.

In a previous **TOI** report, residents of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout (NPKL) had flagged long-pending development works, alleging delays of over a decade. Citing provisions of the Rera Act, 2016, they argued that BDA qualifies as a "promoter" and is liable under K-Rera norms. More than 20 residents approached the authority, with several securing compensation orders for the delays.

Water board collects ₹12cr under OTS scheme

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) said Sunday it has collected Rs 12.1 crore in dues from the first batch of 56,765 notices under its one-time settlement (OTS) scheme.

Officials said this reflects a positive response from consumers willing to settle their water bill dues when offered a transparent and convenient option. The scheme, rolled out on April 6, has a three-month window.

After reviewing legacy records, BWSSB identified more than 2.8 lakh eligible consumers out of more than 3.7 lakh cases. So far, more than 2.1 lakh customised notices have been printed and sent to sub-divisions for distribution across the city.

In a release, BWSSB said it has outsourced printing to handle the large-scale rollout, with the agency producing about 50,000 notices every 48 hours. The remaining notices are expected to be distributed by May 10.

₹471-crore target

Overall, BWSSB aims to recover more than Rs 471.5 crore in principal dues while offering a waiver of Rs 252.3 crore in interest, providing financial relief to the consumers. BWSSB chairman Ram Prasath Manohar said the response highlights public trust in citizen-friendly initiatives. "The encouraging initial response to the OTS scheme shows that when a transparent and respectful system is provided, consumers respond positively. We urge all eligible citizens to make use of this opportunity," he said.

The scheme is expected to ease financial stress on consumers while strengthening BWSSB's revenue base and improving service delivery across Bengaluru.

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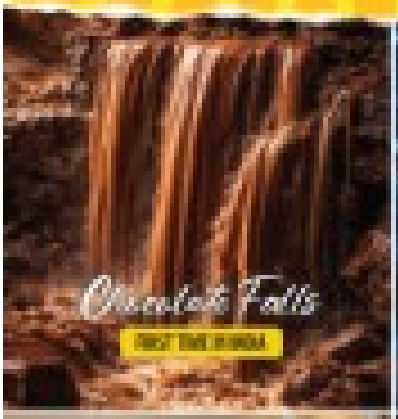

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Experts Estimate Approximately 90% Of Rainfall Runs Off Through Drains And Sealed Surfaces

Bengaluru Gets The Rain, But Loses The Water

Vindhya Pabolu, Anush S & Hamsaveni N | TNN

Last Wednesday's downpour left Bengaluru's roads flooded and drains overflowing, but the massive amount of water was but a little problem compared to the bigger one: that it all went to waste. Hydrologists estimate that the rain delivered 20–22 million cubic metres, but only a fraction of it recharged the groundwater. The rest ran off through drains and sealed surfaces, as it almost always does.

Fifteen years after rainwater harvesting (RWH) became mandatory for new buildings, the city still loses far more water than it saves. But why?

File photo

EVERY DROP COUNTS: Bengaluru's concretisation has crippled its ability to absorb rainfall, and despite it being 15 years since rainwater harvesting made mandatory for new buildings, the city loses more water than it saves

BWSSB earns crores from weak compliance

Bengaluru has nearly 2.4 lakh RWH structures, as per Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB). Yet, 49,958 properties remain non-compliant. For BWSSB, this is not much of a problem, because these properties generate around Rs 4.5 crore every month in penalties.

RWH was made mandatory under Karnataka Groundwater (Regulation and Control of Development and Management) Act, 2012, and Rules, 2013. New buildings had to provide 60 litres of storage per square metre of roof area, and 30 litres per square metre of paved surface. Unpaved and garden areas were exempt. Experts also say compliance alone means little if systems are poorly maintained or surrounding land stays heavily paved.

Ground sealed water-proof

Bengaluru's concretisation has crippled its ability to absorb rainfall. The Groundwater Resources 2025 report shows rainfall contributes 10.2 billion cubic metres (BCM) to Karnataka's annual recharge of 19.3 BCM — roughly 53%. Yet Bengaluru's two districts rank among the most stressed in the state.

Bengaluru Urban's annual recharge stands at 34,265.4 hectare-metre, but extraction runs at 177.3% of the extractable resource, the highest in Karnataka. Bengaluru Rural's recharge is just 18,678.6 hectare-metre, with extraction at 146.8%.

Water conservation expert Vishwanath S says nearly 80% of the city is now paved. "Short, high-intensity rainfall leaves little time for percolation. Roads and buildings seal the ground and prevent infiltration," he elaborated.

Rainwater turns into runoff

Hydrogeologist Devaraj puts it starkly: roughly 90% of Bengaluru's rainfall runs off the surface, only 10% percolates. Despite receiving around 900mm annually, enough to generate over 1.1 lakh litres per household, only a fraction is retained.

KC Subhash Chandra, former member of Karnataka Groundwater Authority's expert panel, said the city generates nearly 17,000 hectare-metres of runoff annually — enough to serve 1.7 million people if conserved. A 2012 study he cited found that plugging leakages alone could serve 9.5 million people, and that less than 3% of water from heavy rainfall events infiltrates the city's soil. Around 25% is lost through stormwater drains, often mixed with sewage. Restoring lakes, separating sewage from stormwater, and expanding permeable surfaces, experts say, are non-negotiable.

Borewell dependence deepens in city

The city now has an estimated 3.7 lakh active borewells, with drilling demand rising sharply in peripheral areas. Without stronger RWH enforcement and recharge planning, experts warn dependence on tanker water and deep borewells will increase.

What officials say

BWSSB chairman Ram Prasanth Manohar said a pilot in south Bengaluru using 60-micron filters has successfully improved harvested rainwater quality to Cauvery standards. The board plans to scale it up. "Penalties alone have not led to behavioural change," he explained.

Meanwhile, a senior water resources department official said good rainfall last year improved groundwater levels and recharged tanks ahead of summer. Technical support to local bodies continues, though implementation rests with individual govt agencies.

NEED TO SAVE WATER

- Bengaluru has nearly **2.4L** rainwater harvesting structures
- **49,958** properties penalised for non-compliance
- Penalties generate around ₹**4.5cr** monthly
- Experts estimate nearly **90%** of rainfall runs off the surface
- Nearly **80%** of the city's ground is paved
- City receives **830-900mm** of rain annually
- B'luru Urban groundwater extraction: **177.3%** | Rural: **146.8%**
- Estimated active borewells in Bengaluru: **3.7L**

Man tries to set teen son on fire, both suffer burns

Times News Network

Bengaluru: An 18-year-old boy and his 45-year-old father are both under treatment for burn injuries after a row over taking the motorcycle without permission escalated to such an extent that the father tried to set his son on fire and then suffered burns himself as the flames spread to him.

The argument broke out between Anand Doddamani and his son, Mallikarjun, on May 1 at Pragathipura in Banashankari. Police said a complaint

FIGHT OVER MOTORCYCLE

filed by Anand's wife, Eeramma, stated that her husband was enraged after their elder son took his motorcycle without permission to go to a temple. Anand called up Mallikarjun and scolded him for roaming with "bad boys".

Even a video call by Mallikarjun to show he was at the temple did not placate his father. In the evening, when Mallikarjun returned home and sat down for dinner, Anand allegedly abused him and picked another quarrel.

Flames carried by wind

Around 9.30pm, Anand stepped out, demanded the bike key, hit his son sitting on the vehicle, and allegedly threatened to kill him. "When my son said 'go ahead, kill me,' my husband got enraged and said, 'I will burn you, just watch,'" Eeramma told police. Anand, a mason, brought petrol he had drained out from the bike and splashed it upon Mallikarjun. At the time, their neighbours were cooking outside. Eramma said the petrol on Mallikarjun caught fire as the wind carried the flames to it. Some petrol had also fell on Anand and it too caught fire, she said.

Mallikarjun and Anand are now undergoing treatment at Victoria Hospital. Police have filed a case for attempt to murder against Anand. Doctors told police that Mallikarjun suffered 40% burn injuries, while Anand sustained 18% burns.

Driver, 26, killed over autorickshaw seat

Bengaluru: A 26-year-old autorickshaw driver, who was undergoing treatment after being assaulted by his acquaintance at Padarayanapura in west Bengaluru, succumbed to his injuries Saturday.

The deceased has been identified as Mubarak, while the accused is Tabrez, 46. Police said Mubarak accused Tabrez of taking his auto's seat on May 1. They got into an argument over the issue and assaulted each other. Residents intervened, separating the duo.

However, Tabrez later attacked Mubarak with a wooden piece. Mubarak sustained a severe head injury and collapsed. People rushed him to a nearby hospital.

Jagajeevanram Nagar police have registered a case of attempt to murder and arrested Tabrez. TNN

Pedestrians struggle with uncleared trees on footpaths

Sanjay.Murty@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: The sudden thunderstorm that resulted in 11cm of rain for over an hour on April 29 brought down hundreds of trees across the city. Even as the authorities have been removing fallen trees and branches, city roads and footpaths are not yet free of large trees and branches.

According to GBA, 476 trees and 1,171 branches fell between April 29 and May 3. Of these, officials claim 444 trees and 1,090 branches have been cleared. However, the presence of chopped trunks and piles of branches on footpaths across the city suggests the work is far from complete. Authorities said their immediate priority was to restore vehicular movement by clearing main roads, with removal of debris from footpaths to follow. On 8th Main Road in Malleswaram, a fallen tree has been cut, but its trunk and branches remain stacked across a newly-constructed footpath. "This is blocking the entrance to an apartment complex and a bank. Many students and senior citizens use this footpath and are now forced to walk on the road," said a resident. On BP Wadia Road in Basavanagudi, large tree trunks remain uncleared. The fall has also damaged the railings along the footpaths.

GBA deputy conservator of forests Sudarshan GK said 30 teams, including GBA rapid response teams and private contractors, have been deployed across the five city corporations to clear the fallen trees. "We had 28 teams for tree canopy management and were in the process of expanding to 66 teams when the thunderstorms hit," he said.

Officials also acknowledged that staff shortage has slowed down their response. Engineering and solid waste management staff, along with police, fire services and NGOs, were pressed into service. "Otherwise, it could have taken 20-25 days to clear all the trees," the official added.

TOI

NO CALM AFTER STORM: On BP Wadia Road in Basavanagudi, large tree trunks remain uncleared on the footpath after the April 29 deluge

Traffic cop lists 404 risky trees

In a letter to GBA, the JCP (traffic), Karthik Reddy, shared a list of 404 trees and branches across the city to be cut, along with location and photos, and the city corporation concerned, requesting immediate action.

'MOTI' initiative promotes community dog adoption

Times News Network

Bengaluru: A walkathon with community dogs, which saw the participation of kids and interactive activities, marked the launch of 'MOTI' (Movement of Trust & Inclusion) initiative at Cubbon Park Sunday. The programme, organised by Bengaluru Central City Corporation (BCCC), aimed to encourage the adoption of community dogs and promote coexistence.

Four Indie (Indian mongrel) dogs were adopted during the event. Officials also administered vaccinations and distributed adoption kits, including dog food, collars, chains, and water bowls.

BCCC additional commissioner (development) Daljit Kumar inaugurated the programme by placing water bowls for dogs, urging citizens to help animals cope with the summer heat and consider adoption. Additional commissioner (revenue) K Ranganath and zonal joint commissioner Hemanth Sharan flagged off the walkathon.

Residents, animal lovers, and NGOs took part in a programme (**in pic**), walking alongside community dogs to raise awareness. Children participated in a painting activity that involved creating paw-print art on paper using community puppies. Paintings highlighting the need for adoption were unveiled.

Four men assault night-patrol cops & flee in SUV; 2 arrested

Times News Network

Bengaluru: Two police constables were assaulted by four unidentified men during night patrol in Akashvani Layout in the early hours of May 1. According to a complaint filed by constable Rudrappa M Hanumar, 36, he and his colleague, constable Hanumanth Alagundi, 29, sustained injuries.

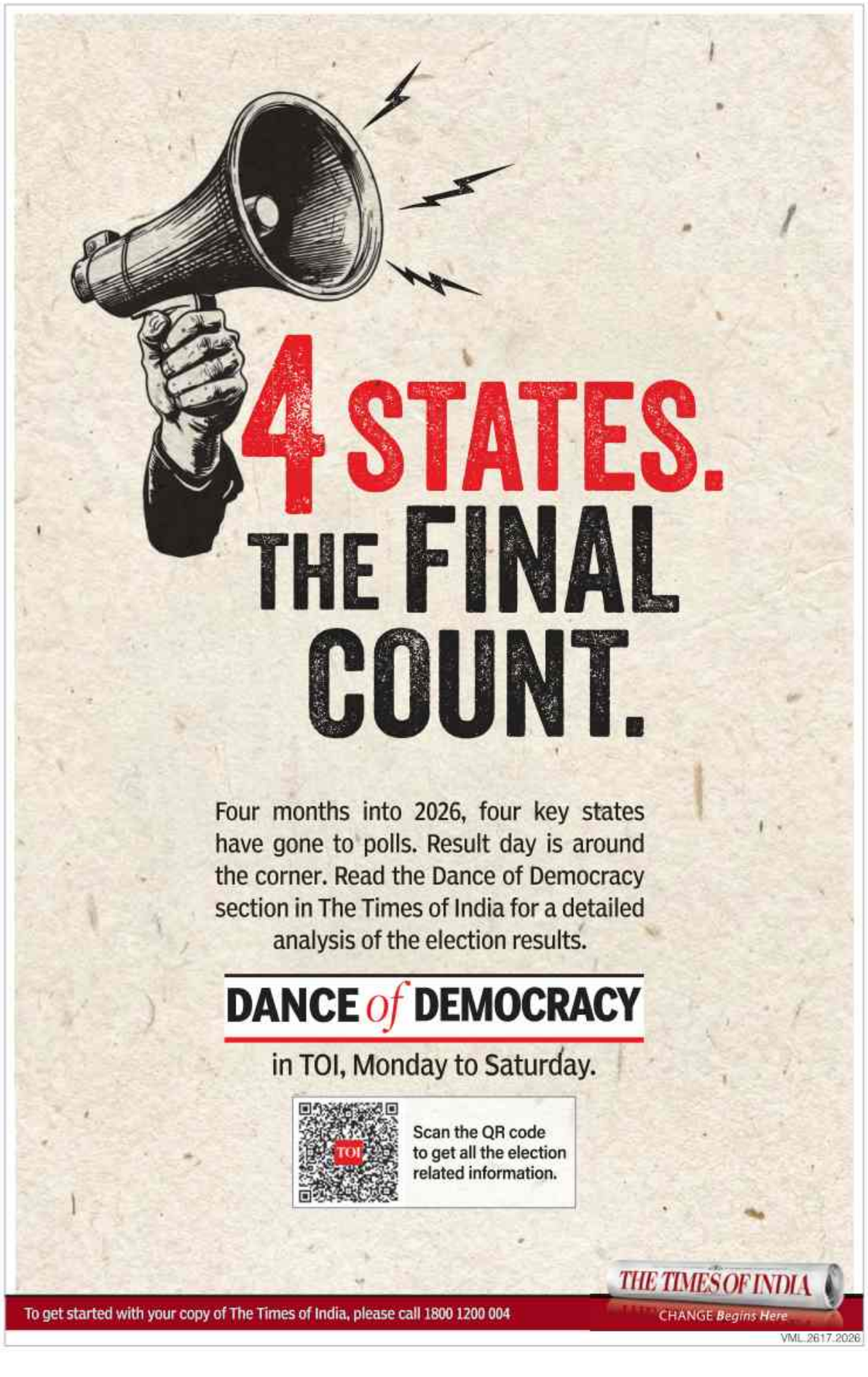
Around 3am, the constables reached Akashvani Layout Main Road in Dasarahalli and found the group consuming alcohol in their SUV (Mitsubishi Pajero). The cops asked them to leave. However, one of them started abusing the constables. Rudrappa went to fetch a lathi from his bike.

The men stepped out of the vehicle and caught hold of both Rudrappa and Hanumanth. They allegedly manhandled the constables and pushed them to the ground.

The men allegedly tore the police uniforms, slapped and kicked the police officers, and snatched their bike key before fleeing in their SUV. The complaint also states that the men punched the constables on their faces. The accused were wearing rings on their fingers.

Police said the accused fled in their Pajero at high speed, making it difficult for the constables to note down the vehicle's number. However, the policemen stated they would be able to identify the attackers.

Police said they have arrested two of the four men and are interrogating them to find out the whereabouts of the other two.



Improper removal of eye makeup can spike inflammation by 40%: Study

Jahnavi.@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Improper use of eye cosmetics, especially failing to remove them at night, can significantly impact eye health, increasing inflammatory markers by up to 40%, according to a recent study by a city-based ophthalmologist.

The study, called 'Biological Cleansing: Toward Improving Ocular Surface Surgical Outcomes', accepted for publication in the Indian Journal of Ophthalmology, analysed tear film biomarkers and found commonly used products such as mascara, eyeliner, eye shadow, and false eyelashes can trigger inflammation and destabilise the tear film when not adequately removed.

"Improper removal of cosmetics can increase inflammatory markers like MMP9, IL-17 and IL-6 by as much as 40%, while also clogging the meibomian glands that are essential for tear film stability. These changes can disrupt the eye's immune balance and even affect cellular repair mechanisms," said Dr Rohit Shetty, clinician and translational scientist and director, Narayana Nethralaya, who led the study.

He added prolonged exposure to such irritants, combined with factors like increased screen time, can lead to chronic issues such as dry eyes, light sensitivity and contact lens intolerance.

Other ophthalmologists **TOI** spoke to said the eye has a built-in "biological cleansing" mechanism. "The tear film is the eye's natural cleansing system. With every blink, it removes dirt, debris and microbes while also delivering antimicrobial substances like lysozyme and immunoglobulins," said Dr Namita C Anagol, senior consultant ophthalmologist at Nethradhama Super Speciality Eye Hospital.

Blinking spreads a fresh layer of tears across the eye while pushing out the older layer. "Cosmetics can interfere with this process. Products like kajal or eyeliner, especially when applied on the waterline, can block gland openings, leading to debris accumulation and an unstable tear film," Dr Namita said.

She also flagged risks linked to newer cosmetic trends. "Eyelash extensions and tattooing alter the natural protective function of eyelashes and introduce chemicals that can irritate the eye," she said.

BETTER STAY SAFE THAN BE SORRY

AI

Experts opined that while cosmetics need not be completely avoided, precautions can minimise their impact. "If using eye makeup is necessary, I recommend opting for products that are as chemical-free and hypoallergenic as possible. It is also important not to apply them daily — limiting usage to once or twice a week is ideal. Maintaining proper eyelid hygiene is crucial," said Dr Sorabh Malik, consultant ophthalmologist at Dr Agarwals Eye Hospital.

He also recommended the "hot fomentation technique" as an effective home remedy. "This involves using a clean cloth dipped in lukewarm water and gently massaging the eyelids to open blocked pores, improve tear secretion and remove debris."

Dr Rohit Shetty emphasised that care should go beyond just removing makeup. "I recommend using medicated eyelid wipes containing ingredients like tea tree oil, castor oil or coconut oil," he said.

He added the focus should be on biological cleansing. "It involves maintaining overall eye health through proper hygiene, ensuring adequate sunlight exposure for Vitamin D, and incorporating supplements such as omega-3 fatty acids and curcumin."

WANTED BRIDE

Wedding Times

Looking for a partnership built on understanding and shared experience?

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Age: 28
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Religion: Hindu
Languages: English and Hindi
Education: MBA

You're 28, a CA and a Mumbai girl who's been told she's "too independent" for her own good. Some call it a curse, others a blessing. You call it Tuesday. You've been on enough awkward coffee dates to write a book titled *Things Not to Say to a Woman Who Pays Her Own Taxes*. You're looking for someone who doesn't flinch when you talk about your career goals, who can hold a conversation about anything from cricket to classical music, and who doesn't think "family-oriented" means you'll stop having opinions after marriage.

You're not looking for perfection. You're looking for someone who shows up, listens more than they perform, and can laugh at themselves. Bonus points if they've read more than three books in the last year and can recommend a good one.

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Interested? Write to us at [redacted] with the subject line "Wanted Bride" and tell us why you'd be a good match. We'll pass along the most thoughtful ones.

YOUR POV

Don't like what you've read? Let us know your point of view on a current issue

The true cost of our indifference to our heritage

Editor, Sanskriti Vihar address: We are writing to express our deep concern about the rapid deterioration of the Kalyani Stepwell, which has been a landmark in our locality for over three centuries. Despite repeated requests to the municipal authorities, no repairs have been undertaken in the past seven years. Large cracks have appeared in the steps, and the water has become unfit for use. We urge the authorities to act before this irreplaceable structure is lost forever.

A quiet compelling how to find your way?

Editor, Lake View Colony address: Our neighbourhood has been without a functioning streetlight on the main road for almost three months now. Residents, especially women returning from work, feel unsafe walking after dark. We have written to the ward office twice and received no response. We request that the matter be taken up on priority.

Why this sound idea has taken on a new meaning

Editor, Hillcrest address: We are writing to express our deep concern about the rapid deterioration of the Kalyani Stepwell, which has been a landmark in our locality for over three centuries. Despite repeated requests to the municipal authorities, no repairs have been undertaken in the past seven years. Large cracks have appeared in the steps, and the water has become unfit for use. We urge the authorities to act before this irreplaceable structure is lost forever.

A woman turns down. And we're all not at sea with that choice

Editor, Harbour Gate address: We are writing to express our deep concern about the rapid deterioration of the Kalyani Stepwell, which has been a landmark in our locality for over three centuries. Despite repeated requests to the municipal authorities, no repairs have been undertaken in the past seven years. Large cracks have appeared in the steps, and the water has become unfit for use. We urge the authorities to act before this irreplaceable structure is lost forever.

Are Japan's famous vending machines losing their appeal?

A good choice

We are writing to express our deep concern about the rapid deterioration of the Kalyani Stepwell, which has been a landmark in our locality for over three centuries. Despite repeated requests to the municipal authorities, no repairs have been undertaken in the past seven years. Large cracks have appeared in the steps, and the water has become unfit for use. We urge the authorities to act before this irreplaceable structure is lost forever.

TODAY'S SUDOKU

CROSSWORD

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

FREECELL CROSSWORD

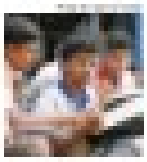
KAKURO

KENKEN

FINDLEX

SOLUTIONS TO GAMES PUZZLES

Ramaniaka to upgrade 16 rural schools to PU colleges



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Labour dept plans ₹8.7k school kit for construction workers' children

Sandeep.Moudgal
@timesofindia.com

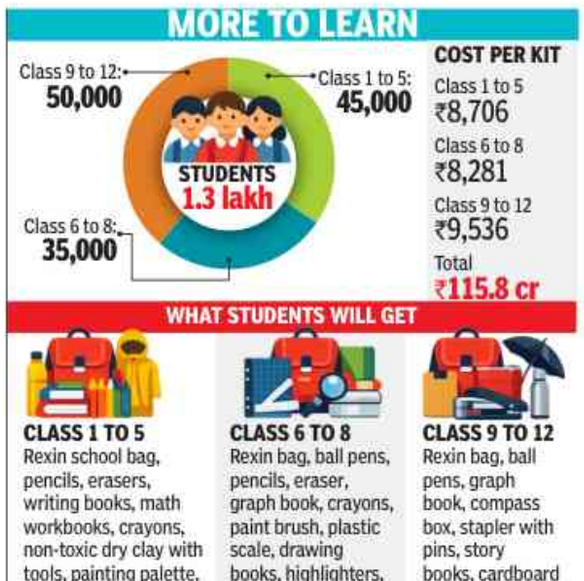
Bengaluru: The labour department, through Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board, has decided to provide school kits worth Rs 8,736 or more to children of registered construction workers across the state.

The department had previously identified some 1.3 lakh beneficiaries, taking the total estimated cost of procurement and distribution of kits to a staggering Rs 115.8 crore. The proposal received cabinet approval last week.

The scheme, which had been discontinued following allegations of inflated procurement costs and a reported scam in 2021 during the tenure of the BJP govt, is now being revived.

Each kit will include 23 items, ranging from comic books in Kannada and English to grammar textbooks, thermos flasks, and play dough for younger children. The kits will be tailored to suit different age groups, covering students from Classes 1 to 12, and categorised into primary, middle, and high school levels.

To ensure quality, the department plans to seek 4(g) exemption — which bypasses the tender process — mandating that only "lekhak" brand books be supplied.



High demand

Labour minister Santosh Lad said the decision to relaunch the scheme follows requests from multiple stakeholders. "While we were against supplying these school kits, BJP legislators and trade unions wrote to us seeking a relaunch of the scheme," Lad said. "So, we have decided to supply these kits through Mysore Sales International Ltd (MSIL) which is independent of the labour department."

Lad said the welfare board will bear the full cost of procurement, while MSIL will handle the tendering process. "Implementation of the scheme calls for a balance of quality and cost effectiveness, which MSIL is capable of ensuring," said the minister.

Officials from MSIL and the welfare board said the pricing has been determined based on annual requirements for students. "Costs for some of the items may seem high but that is due to the multiple number of same items as well as ensuring quality of products since they must last the entire year," said officials.

For example, comic books for Classes 1 to 5 are priced at Rs 895 for a set of 10 books in Kannada, English, or both. Similarly, pens priced at Rs 90 per box of 10 are being supplied in multiples, raising the per-child cost to Rs 179 for middle school students and Rs 268 for high school students.

Fire scare at DKS programme

Times News Network

FEELING THE HEAT: Police and officials in Sindhanur quickly put out the blaze, which began when dry grass in the area caught fire. Officials also inspected Shivakumar's chopper after it landed

Sindhanur (Raichur): A fire broke out near the stage at a govt programme attended by deputy CM DK Shivakumar, and his helicopter was briefly grounded as staff conducted a safety inspection leading to tense moments Sunday.

Shivakumar had arrived to promote welfare schemes in Kalyana Karnataka region, and the turnout swelled due to actor Sudeep's presence, leading to heavy crowding around the stage and helipad.

Sudeep's helicopter was asked to re-land shortly after take-off as a precaution amid airspace coordination concerns, causing some confusion. Officials also inspected Shivakumar's helicopter after it landed.

The fire near the stage triggered momentary alarm. Initial reports suggested dry grass near the helipad caught fire, possibly due to heat or smoke from the helicopters, although some suggested a possible electrical issue near the stage. Police quickly contained the blaze, ensuring no injuries..

Despite the incidents, the programme continued, with Shivakumar addressing the gathering and interacting with beneficiaries. The visit is part of Congress party's efforts to strengthen its base in Raichur, with Sindhanur, an important agrarian segment in the area.

Afforestation target cut to 3cr saplings amid supply woes

Niranjan.Kaggere
@timesofindia.com

> There is a renewed emphasis on planting taller and more robust saplings, which are believed to have a higher chance of survival, particularly in challenging climatic conditions
> **Eshwar Khandre** | FOREST MINISTER

Bengaluru: After planting 10 crore saplings over the past two monsoons, the govt has scaled down its ambitious afforestation target this year, citing a shortage of quality saplings in forest nurseries, even as it continues to push for promising survival rates and greater accountability in statewide plantation drives.

Amid concerns over declining green cover, the govt set a goal of planting five crore saplings annually two years ago as part of a broader plan to raise 25 crore saplings by 2028. The annual target was achieved in the first two years through large-scale drives carried out during successive monsoons with support from institutions, NGOs and volunteers. However, this year, the govt has reduced the target to 3 crore saplings.

Forest minister Eshwar Khandre, at a workshop on heat wave preparedness in Bengaluru last week, said the decision was driven by "practical" challenges.

Officials attribute the shortfall primarily to depletion of nursery stock. Forest department sources said surplus saplings available in nurseries were exhausted during the initial two years of intensive planting. Raising adequate stock of fresh, high-quality saplings requires time — about one to two years, they said. In some instances, especially in parts of Kalyana Karnataka last year, the department sourced plants from Rajahmundry in Andhra to meet targets.

Now, the govt is recalibrating its strategy. Referring to survival rates, Khandre said official estimates place them between 80% and 85%. "I would not admit these figures but even if you reduce this by another 10%, our saplings' success rate is around 70-75%," he said. "In urban areas like Bengaluru, the survival rate is above 90%. We have been mulling planting 10 crore saplings in Bengaluru alone to address intense heat-wave conditions in the city."

New crest gates expand dam's lifespan by 50 yrs

Times News Network

Koppal: Deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar Sunday said restoration and installation of all 33 crest gates at Tungabhadra dam is in its final stages, with the govt aiming to inaugurate the project by May 15. After inspecting work on-site, he said only finishing touches remain.

A decision on replacing all the gates was taken after gate No 19 was washed away in Aug 2025, prompting immediate intervention. As part of the project, sluice plates have been installed on most gates, while additional safety measures such as replacement of chains are being carried out based on expert recommendations. The first batch of new chains is expected soon, with the overall process set to conclude by the end of May.

TUNGABHADRA

Calling the exercise a major engineering achievement, Shivakumar said completing the work within a tight time frame posed a significant challenge and set a benchmark nationally. The govt spent about Rs 54 crore on gate restoration, besides Rs 315 crore on canal repairs and allied works. Experts estimate that the measures will enhance the dam's lifespan by up to 50 years.

ANI

GLAMOROUS TOUCH: Sadhvi Satish Sail, Miss India World 2026 winner, and her father Karwar MLA Satish Sail called on DK Shivakumar in Bengaluru Sunday

Shivakumar said the dam remains a critical irrigation source for vast stretches across Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, supporting lakhs of farmers. Acknowledging their cooperation, he said many farmers sacrificed a crop to facilitate the works, and they would be invited for a public function after completion.

He also highlighted key concerns, including silt accumulation that has reduced storage capacity and reports of industrial effluents entering the dam. He said the govt is examining advanced desilting solutions through global tenders. Shivakumar also said discussions will be held with Andhra Pradesh on the proposed Navali parallel reservoir project, with both states sharing costs in a 64:36 ratio.

Bypolls: Tight security for counting of votes

Elaborate security arrangements have been made for Monday's counting of votes to two assembly constituencies in the state – Bagalkot and Davanagere South. The Election Commission said 14 tables each have been set up at University of Horticultural Sciences in Bagalkot and DRR School at Davanagere. The EC had pegged voter turnout on April 19 at 68.7% in Bagalkot, and 68.4% in Davanagere South. The bypolls were necessitated by the deaths of senior Congress MLAs HY Meti (Bagalkot) and Shamanur Shivashankarappa (Davanagere South). The outcome will have no impact on the govt, but it would give both Congress and BJP massive bragging rights.

100-bed ESIC hospital opens in Doddaballapur

Union minister Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated a 100-bed Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) hospital in Doddaballapur, Bengaluru Rural, a facility constructed at a cost of over Rs 101 crore. K Sudhakar, local MP, who was present at the launch said the hospital features key departments such as orthopaedics, general medicine, surgery, gynaecology and pediatrics besides advanced diagnostic and radiology services. Mandaviya said the hospital would strengthen workers' welfare and healthcare security, providing comprehensive coverage to nearly 5.5 lakh people. He said the foundation stone has been laid for a similar 100-bed hospital in Ballari, costing over Rs 150 crore.

50L calls in 3 yrs: Farmers' helpline braces for deluge

Pearl.DSouza@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: With more than 50 lakh calls from farmers in the past three years alone, the Varuna Mitra helpline is bracing for a fresh surge amid erratic rain and drought-year anxieties.

The helpline, which provides medium-term forecasts for farmers based on predictions from Isro's Space Applications Centre, receives 4,000 to 5,000 calls daily. In June, the call centre expects this to cross 15,000 calls a day.

Launched in 2011, the helpline saw a record number of calls in 2023 — when the state faced a drought-like situation, said MS Divakara, director, Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre (KSNDMC).

This year, while conditions were neutral through April and May, an El Nino may emerge this month, said Divakara. "For Karnataka, history suggests this would mean drought and deficit rainfall. A clearer picture will emerge once IMD gives its opinion after May 15," he said.

The centre, which operates from KSNDMC in Bengaluru, has 18 youngsters who answer calls. Once a call is placed, the caller's name and location are recorded so that the non-toll-free call can be kept as brief as possible.

"The calls are so regular and frequent that farmers recognise the call centre personnel, and vice versa, by name," an official said.

Divakara said farmers, known for their intuition on weather patterns, sometimes call to confirm their own predictions. "They say it is cloudy and has been windy and ask if it would drizzle or pour in the next 24 hours," he said.

The number is linked to the World Bank-funded Rejuvenating Watershed for Agricultural Resilience Through Innovative Development (REWARD) project for 21 districts, with services extended to all 31 districts in the state.

"While rain and wind speed predictions help farmers decide whether to irrigate or apply fertiliser, REWARD personnel guide them in choosing crops based on weather forecasts for the sowing cycle," said Abhishek, senior customer service representative. "This is based on inputs from scientists from agricultural universities. Farmers also call us about pest issues and we offer solutions or connect them with district, taluk or hobli representatives from the agriculture or horticulture department."

A 2020 Climate Change Scenario report by the centre pointed to NIK's 88 lakh hectares being drought-vulnerable, the highest acreage compared to other regions in the state.

Resolve Turahalli buffer zone issue: BDA

Vindhya.Pabolu@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) wrote to the forest department last week seeking an urgent joint meeting to find a permanent solution to the long-pending Turahalli forest buffer zone dispute — a crisis that has left hundreds of plot owners unable to construct homes on legally purchased sites for several years.

In the letter, the authority flagged numerous plots in its Banashankari 6th Phase layout — spread across Blocks 1 to 11 — fall within the buffer zone of the forest area, and that the forest department has been refusing construction permissions to affected plot owners, causing widespread confusion and distress among citizens who invested their life savings in BDA-allotted sites.

FOREST MATTERS

A senior BDA official said, "Around 1,300 sites were initially under the buffer zone, causing hardship to many families. After joint efforts and surveys, a total of 1,000 were taken out of the buffer zone, leaving about 300 sites, covering around 18 acres, within the buffer zone along the forest boundary. This has brought relief to many, with several families starting construction. Now, with clearer data from joint surveys, the focus is on finding a legal framework for a permanent solution, which will be discussed in the upcoming meeting."

In the letter, BDA said a drone survey of the Turahalli forest and adjoining layout was conducted on Jan 10, 2026, in coordination with forest officials. The findings were discussed in joint meetings with consultants, leading to a revised layout map identifying buffer zone sites, which was submitted to the forest department.

BDA has now formally requested the forest conservator to urgently fix a date for a high-level joint meeting, involving the additional chief secretaries of the forest, environment and biology departments to discuss the issue comprehensively and arrive at a permanent solution for the issue regarding the Turahalli forest buffer zone.

Vendor deaths: Union demands higher payout

Bengaluru: A city-based street vendors' union has written to chief minister Siddaramaiah with the demand for increased compensation and rehabilitation efforts for street vendors who died and those who were injured when the wall of Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital collapsed on Wednesday.

Karnataka PragatiPara Beedhi Vyaparigala Sangha Sunday demanded that the compensation for those who lost their lives be increased from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 25 lakh. "Many of the injured vendors are expected to take several months to recover and resume their livelihoods," the union reasoned while seeking a compensation of Rs 10 lakh for each injured person. It also urged the govt to hold immediate consultations with street vendors to identify and allocate safe and viable vending spaces to them. "Several vendors have also suffered loss of goods and working capital due to the incident. The govt and GBA must urgently convene a meeting to discuss the ill effects of climate change on informal workers such as street vendors, gig and platform workers, and pourakarmikas," the union said. TNN

BOWRING TRAGEDY

Astrologer accused of raping city beautician

Times News Network

Bengaluru: A 35-year-old south Bengaluru woman has accused an astrologer of sexual exploitation under the guise of spirituality. She lodged a complaint with Chennammanakere Achukattu police on April 27, claiming **Mohan Kumar J** raped her.

He is also accused of luring women with promises of solving personal and business problems through pujas and "diksha."

According to the complainant, the self-styled astrologer would gain the trust of families by claiming he could offer solutions to their troubles.

Mohan contacted the complainant, who runs a beautician training centre, over the phone on Jan 1 last year, and visited the centre the following day to enrol his sister. He advised the complainant and her husband to perform a few rituals to improve her business. The woman said he took her to Pyramid Valley in Ramanagara district on Jan 30 and misbehaved with her. Later, he took her to Chamundeshwari temple in Mysuru on Feb 8 and then visited Nimishamba temple. While returning, he tried to rape her, and when she resisted, he threatened to harm her family through black magic, she said.

He visited her residence on the pretext of giving diksha. He sent her husband and son to offer prayers to a tree for one and a half hours. While her husband and son went to a park, Mohan allegedly raped her. He also took her to a village for two days and abused her. The complainant said that when she had an infection, Mohan took her to a hospital. He also advised her husband to run a hotel, and during his absence, he allegedly abused her. A senior police officer said Mohan has gone incommunicado.

Forest fire guts 6 acres in Kudremukh

A forest fire that broke out in Kudremukh National Park (KNP) Saturday was brought under control the same night after a swift response by the forest department. The blaze occurred in a grassland patch in Belthangady, damaging around 6–7 acres of forest area. Officials confirmed that no wildlife was harmed.

Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF) Shivaram M Babu said the fire is suspected to be caused by humans and may have originated from a nearby area, with the exact cause still under assessment. Local residents reported spotting flames on the hillside, visible from Aladangady town.

Forest authorities said all camps remain on high alert, with teams responding immediately to fire alerts. Fire watchers appointed last year continue to assist in monitoring and rapid response efforts, enabling officials to contain such incidents quickly. TNN

B'luru to get immersive museum soon to decode brain and mind

Times News Network

Bengaluru: The National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (Nimhans) has commissioned private firm Tagbin to develop a large-scale neuroscience-led immersive museum in the city, valued at approximately Rs 35 crore.

The 'Museum of Brain and Mind' is being built around a deceptively simple idea: "Know why you are the way you are." It aims to bridge the gap between the brain — the physical organ — and the mind, the cognitive and emotional dimension that governs how people think, feel, and behave. The museum, expected to be completed in a couple of months, will walk visitors through brain anatomy, cognitive processes such as memory and decision-making, human evolution, and the full spectrum of neurological and psychiatric disorders, along with their treatments.

Stating that this would be "India's first large-scale neuroscience-led immersive museum," the firm said the experience is designed as a continuous, integrated journey rather than a collection of standalone exhibits. Visitors will move through zones covering the brain's structure and states, life cycle development from prenatal to old age, emotional and cognitive processes,

AI

NIMHANS INITIATIVE

therapeutic approaches including music and colour therapy, and the relationship between the brain, society, and technology.

"More than 50 interactive installations will be deployed, combining sensor-based interfaces, audio-visual storytelling, immersive simulations, gaming, and visual art. Our approach involves translating Nimhans' deep clinical and research expertise into experiences that are accessible to the general audience," Tagbin CEO Saurav Bhaik said.

Complex neurological and psychiatric science will be rendered through exhibits and narrative-led spaces designed to be emotionally engaging, not merely informative.

According to Tagbin, the intended effects are fourfold: educating visitors on brain science, dismantling myths and stigma around mental health, encouraging preventive awareness of disorders, and building empathy through immersive depictions of real conditions and therapies. "The museum will also house what is described as the largest collection of preserved brains, lending it significant scientific and research value alongside its public-facing role. It draws on inputs from neuroscience, psychiatry, psychology, rehabilitation medicine, and traditional knowledge systems, making it one of the most interdisciplinary museum projects undertaken in India," the firm said.

The Nimhans project is part of a broader portfolio of institutional and public-space projects Tagbin has executed across the country. The firm launched an aerospace experience initiative for Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in Bengaluru in April 2026, and has previously worked on the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya in New Delhi and smart tourism platforms for Ladakh, among others. "Across more than 100 projects, we've recorded a cumulative project value exceeding Rs 500 crore and engaged more than 10 million visitors annually across physical and digital platforms," the firm added.

Ballots tampered with: Complaint

▶ Continued from page 1

We demand a larger inquiry (into vote chori) and shall fight it in court," Shivakumar said. Rajegowda currently heads Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Ltd.

Postal ballots were recounted under tight police security at IDSG College in Chikkamagaluru. Rajegowda hinted at fraud, saying the ballot papers cast in his favour were found with "additional markings".

Sudhir Kumar Murolli, Rajegowda's counting agent, disputed the latest recount. He lodged a complaint with Chikkamagaluru Town police, alleging that the ballots were tampered with.

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SAD DEMISE

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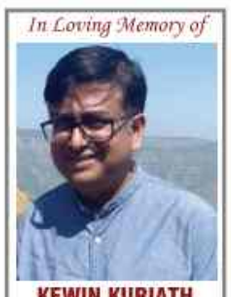

KEWIN KURIATH CHITILAPILLY
(June 9th 1974-May 2nd 2026)
Viewing and funeral will be held on 04.05.2026, 9:30 am at St. Anthony's Friary Church, 85, Hosur Road, Koramangala Post, Bengaluru-560095.
Followed by: Cremation at 12 pm Wilson Garden Crematorium, Kengal Hanumanthaiah Circle, Hosur Main Road, Wilson Garden, Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560027.
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Sujatha, Naomi & Noel

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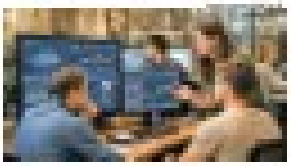
Architecture has evolved to embrace sustainable design

Why 'Land of Long White Cloud' is emerging as a study abroad hotspot

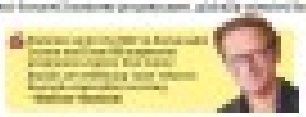
The recent India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement agreement guarantees the right to work at least 20 hours per week during studies, even if future policy changes, writes Mr.

Scholarships and affordability are steering Indian students toward Japan over Western destinations

Agentic AI adoption surges, Fintechs lead incumbents: Report



English-taught courses at Paris institute strengthen Franco-Indian academic bridges



TIMES NATION

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | MONDAY, MAY 4, 2026

CENTRE, NC GOVT TRYING TO ERASE J&K'S IDENTITY BY TARGETTING ISLAMIC INSTITUTIONS: MEHBOOBA

ADMIRAL TRIPATHI EMBARKS MYANMAR NAVY VESSEL; DISCUSSES MARITIME SECURITY WITH MILITARY LEADERS

HACK OF THE DAY — **SEND SENSITIVE MEDIA AS VIEW ONCE**

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WHAT TO DO: Use WhatsApp View Once for temporary information such as IDs, codes, locations, or private media

STEPS:

1. **Open** the WhatsApp chat
2. **Attach** the photo, video, or voice message you want to send
3. **Tap** the View Once icon before sending
4. **Send** the message only after checking the recipient
5. **Use** View Once again each time you want the same protection

CAREFUL: View Once reduces persistence, but it is not magic. The recipient may still remember, photograph, or otherwise capture sensitive information

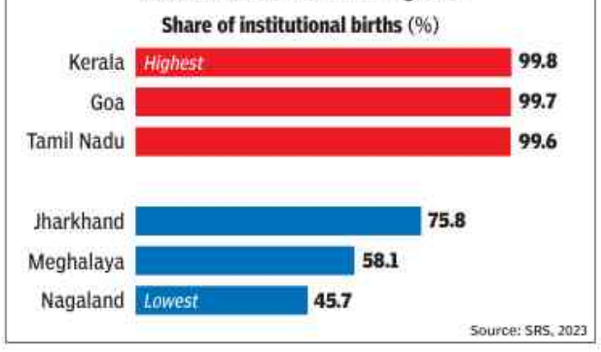
SCAN FOR MORE

Hacks are based on verified public sources. Readers are advised to follow official websites & updated rules

STATISTICS A slice of life in numbers

Nearly 9 in 10 births in India happen in health facilities

In 2023, almost 90% of births in India took place in a medical facility under trained supervision, which lowers risks for both mother and baby. But the share ranged widely, from 99.8% in Kerala to 45.7% in Nagaland



Source: SRS, 2023

Today's results to 5 Houses will give broad mood of the nation

Set To Impact Equations Nationally

Kumar Rakesh & Subodh Ghildiyal | TNN

New Delhi: BJP is looking to take down the opposition in one of its few remaining strongholds West Bengal, while its rivals hope to hold their line in their redoubts in eastern and southern India, with the results to five assemblies polls — West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Kerala and Puducherry — set to offer a peek into the broader political mood of the nation.

Reverberations of the results will echo nationally, as the match-ups include intra-opposition battles, besides BJP confronting its rivals. They may also have serious repercussions for the INDIA bloc as Congress has ruffled feathers by being lukewarm in its partnership with DMK, and by its continuing dissonance with TMC in contrast to the Mamata-positive vibes of other allies like Samajwadi Party, JMM and RJD.

At stake on Monday is the fate of two regional colossus, DMK and TMC, who also are key members of the anti-BJP coalition. DMK was seen as secure in Tamil Nadu till the newbie TVK of supertstar Vijay made a late charge to make the mandate uncertain.

While DMK is confident that Vijay has cut largely into AIADMK votes, there are doubts in certain pockets about how the "silent" women voted.

But the most keenly watched outcome will be West Bengal's, where exit polls have given divergent verdicts in favour of BJP and TMC. BJP — led by PM Narendra Modi's extended campaign — is looking to spread its footprint by conquering a state that sends the third-largest contingent of MPs to the Lok Sabha. Bengal's cultural roots and personalities have been central to BJP's identity, but its standing as an unbreachable 'secular' fortress has been a sore spot for the party.

On the other hand, Mamata Banerjee, who had mounted an aggressive counter-campaign, will be tested for her famed resilience and connect to the grassroots. If TMC wins, Mamata would enhance her stature as one of the few opposition leaders capable of blunting the saffron onslaught at its sharpest in an election held under the shadow of SIR. A fourth successive win, three of them with BJP in office at the Centre, would burnish her credentials in the opposition camp.

Meanwhile in Kerala, it could be the end of the victory drought for Congress with exit polls predicting it will oust the Left Front. If the Left loses, it would for the first time be without a govt since 1977. But a Congress failure now — a third successive defeat in the state which otherwise is famous for unseating the governing party — will be a debilitating blow.

Exit polls are all but unanimous in predicting BJP's third successive win in Assam, the only state it has a govt in this round of polls. A victory will be a major feat for the party which came from nowhere in 2016 to win a majority in the state against Congress, and has since marginalised the once-dominant party to being a side player.

Also out will be the result of the assembly polls in the Union territory of Puducherry but its political fallout is likely to be limited.

Forces deployed outside Bhabanipur counting centre ahead of counting

'VVPAT slips' found by road; mock ones: EC

Hours before counting of votes for the Bengal Assembly election, over 1,000 VVPAT slips belonging to Noapara Assembly constituency were recovered from a roadside drain at Madhyamgram near Duttapukur in North 24 Parganas district on Sunday afternoon, report **Sanjib Chakraborty, Dwaipayan Ghosh & Debashis Konar.** DM Shilpa Gaurisaria said an inquiry has been initiated. "Police were immediately sent to the spot. We are probing how the slips reached there. The EC has also been informed," she said. The EC said, "Upon examination, it was found that the VVPAT paper slips shown are related to mock polling done before polling day and not related to actual polling conducted. Further, a detailed probe has been initiated, and a formal plaint has been lodged for verification." Polling in Noapara took place on April 29.

3 aides of TMC Falta pick held for intimidation

Dwaipayan Ghosh & Sanjib Chakraborty

Falta/ Kolkata: Bengal police have arrested three aides of TMC's Falta candidate Jahangir Khan for allegedly threatening voters with violence and arson. Atibur Rahman, Habib Sheikh and Habib Molla are among those named; a panchayat pradhan and another person have also been named in the case.

Bengal CEO Manoj Agarwal said officials on election duty in Falta will face an inquiry into malpractices that led to the repoll.

Meanwhile, tension gripped Noapara in North 24 Parganas after bike-borne assailants opened fire at the residence of BJP's Barrackpore organisational district secretary early Sunday. CCTV footage of the attack has gone viral, prompting police to arrest the accused, allegedly linked to TMC. In Kolkata's Panchasayar, six people were named in a case for allegedly threatening to rape a group of women in Jadavpur.

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Delay in response to fire: Residents

▶ Continued from page 1

Five bodies were recovered from the third floor — Arvind Jain (60), his wife Anita (58), their son Nishank (35), his wife Aanchal (33) and their 1.5-year-old son Akaay. As firefighters moved to the fourth floor, three more bodies were found near the staircase leading to the terrace, which was locked. The deceased were Nitin Jain (50), his wife Shailey (48) and their son Samyak (25).

Shikha's daughters Rakshita (22) and Priyal (15) escaped by jumping from the second-floor balcony onto a mattress that a neighbour had placed on the ground below, cushioning their fall as flames began reaching the balcony. Their father, Naveen Jain, also suffered injuries.

On what may have happened, Nitin's mother Deepa told TOI, "They tried to run upstairs to reach the terrace, but they must have picked up the wrong keys to open the lock. They couldn't get it open and got trapped there."

Residents alleged a delay in response, saying the fire started around 3.13am. At the time, most residents were sleeping. Several locals at the spot claimed multiple calls were made to DFS, but the number turned out to be 'invalid'. Pritesh, Nishank's brother-in-law, said, "Nishank made calls to friends and family members, informing them about the fire."

A senior fire official said they received the first call around 3.47am and teams were dispatched immediately.

The building where the blaze broke out houses eight families, with an 800 sq yard plot split into two 400 sq yard flats on each floor. The structure comprises stilt parking and four floors – first, second, third and fourth. Each floor is divided into multiple flats, with a total of eight flats in the building.

DCP (Shahdara) RP Meena said the fire is suspected to have started due to a malfunctioning air-conditioner on the second floor.

Residents pointed to multiple hazards that may have worsened the situation. They said the entire backside — which should ideally serve as ventilation or an emergency exit — had been sealed with iron grills, with no staircase or opening for escape. With no alternative access, firefighters had to cut through the iron grills to reach the trapped residents, a process that proved time-consuming.

'Bhaiya, bacha lo': Frantic last call as flames spread

Devanshi Mehta & Khushi Bhuta

New Delhi: Every Saturday, 35-year-old Nishank Jain and his family would gather over a video call. This time, the conversations were filled with excitement as they planned to celebrate five-year-old Anant's birthday on Sunday at a resort in Manesar.

Deepak (37), Nishank's elder brother and Anant's father, had already reached the resort with his wife and children, while the rest of the family was to join the next day. Nishank, his wife Aanchal (33), their 18-month-old son Akaay, and Nishank's parents, Arvind (60) and Anita (58), never made it. All five were charred to death. Family members said that around 3.45am, as flames spread rapidly, Nishank made frantic calls to Deepak, crying, *"Bhaiya, bacha lo."* The calls ended abruptly. They later contacted their driver, Karamvir Singh, to go and check. By then, it was too late.

Nishank, a CA at his firm in Connaught Place, and Anchal, an employee at a public sector bank, had waited eight years for a child. Akaay's birth had brought immense joy to the family.

Anushka Kogta

Charred remains on one side of the building that caught fire in east Delhi's Vivek Vihar

"They had been waiting for the baby for so long. It is all gone in an instant," said Pritesh, Nishank's brother-in-law.

Outside the emergency ward at Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital, Deepak broke down as relatives tried to console him. Sonali, Deepak's wife and Nishank's sister-in-law, recalled that they had repeatedly been pushing Nishank to join them earlier in Manesar. However, he had instead decided to stay back home and go later.

With buckets & bravery, they pulled off mission rescue

Devanshi Mehta & Khushi Bhuta | TNN

New Delhi: When a residential building in Vivek Vihar turned into a furnace, the difference between life and death rested on split-second acts of bravery.

Trapped between intimidating walls of flames and jammed exits, the residents' narrow path to survival was shaped by a group of bravehearts who refused to succumb to fire or panic. Even as firefighters navigated blind stairwells to pull residents out, there were selfless locals whose quick thinking saved many lives.

Gurdeep Singh Gill, who lives on the second floor of an adjacent building, was about to go to bed when the sound of screaming drew him to his balcony. The sight was harrowing: Flames leapt out of the first floor of the neighbouring building and were fast approaching a balcony where two sisters, Rakshita (22) and Priyal (15), were trapped. With fire services yet to reach the spot, Gill realised he had only seconds to save the girls. "I knew they couldn't wait," he told **TOI**.

Gill sprinted to his room, dragged mattresses off his beds, and tossed them into a narrow space used for parking on the ground floor. "Jump!" he shouted to the sisters over the roar of the fire. "I told them they had to immediately jump and that we were right there to catch them. And they did," Gill said, recalling the leap of faith that saved the lives of the sisters.

Even as he was coordinating the rescue, another neighbour, 40-year-old Vishal, was fighting a desperate battle from his own balcony on the first floor of another building. The heat was so intense that it had already melted his outdoor AC unit and scorched the walls of his balcony.

Selfless locals whose quick thinking saved many lives: (Clockwise from left) Vishal, Gurdeep Singh Gill and Manik Malhotra

"The flames were leaping out of their kitchen and balcony right towards my home," Vishal said. Despite the blistering heat, he began a frantic relay — filling up buckets in his bathroom and rushing back to the balcony. "I made multiple trips, throwing water through the grills into the side of their floor. I just wanted to stop the fire from spreading further or reaching other units."

Manik Malhotra (32), an IT professional, said he reached the spot around 4.30 am and saw the blaze being fanned by strong winds. After coming to know that the firefighters did not have angle grinders to cut the sturdy steel grills — the regular cutters were of no use — he rushed to the site of his under-construction house, fished out a grinder and handed it over to them. "A neighbour gave them another one," Malhotra said, adding that even the grinders struggled to the prise open the grills.

Both the firefighters and locals highlighted the courage of a young girl inside the building, which was on fire. "I told her to hold our water pipe and spray it on the blaze while we cut through the grills. Despite the risk, she did her job, preventing the fire from spreading and giving us crucial time to complete the rescue," a firefighter said.

Raja Hashmi from Shaheed Bhagat Singh Sewa Dal said a team of 15 members, along with 12 ambulances, was among the first responders to reach the spot. The ambulances were used to promptly shift the injured to nearby hospitals.

"The house had a central locking system, complicating rescue efforts. The firefighters eventually had to cut through an iron gate on the third floor. From that point, we assisted them in evacuating and transporting the injured," Hashmi said.

Nepal objects to Mansarovar Yatra through Lipulekh Pass

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The India-Nepal border dispute could flare up again, with Kathmandu objecting to India's decision — backed by China — to resume the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra through Uttarakhand's Lipulekh Pass, which Nepal claims.

Nepal's foreign ministry said Sunday it had raised the issue with India and China, reiterating its "clear stance" that Lipulekh falls in Nepali territory under the Sugauli Treaty of 1816.

It said Limpiyadhura, Lipulekh and Kalapani — east of the Mahakali River — are integral parts of Nepal. India has previously rejected such claims, asking Nepal to respect its sovereignty. The issue could test ties as the new govt in Kathmandu shapes foreign policy, with talks on a visit by foreign secretary Vikram Misri next week.

Canadian agency accuses India of interference, spying

New Delhi: A Canadian intelligence agency has included India and China in a list of countries involved allegedly in foreign interference and espionage in Canada. In the case of India, however, Khalistan extremism was identified as a major national security threat to Canada, a point New Delhi has belaboured with Ottawa for a long time.

The report by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) comes in the middle of efforts by PM Mark Carney to repair the relationship with India that saw him visiting the country earlier this year. In the past 12 months, Carney and his counterpart, Narendra Modi, have successfully managed to drag the relationship out of a deep freeze that it had descended into over the killing of a Khalistan separatist — Hardeep Singh Nijjar — allegedly by Indian agents in 2023.

Apart from India and China, the report named Pakistan, Russia and Iran as main perpetrators of foreign interference and espionage against Canada. TNN

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Govt to screen kids for diabetes, roll out free lifelong treatment

Move Part Of Expanding Scope Of Centre's Flagship RBSK Prog

Anuja.Jaiswal
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: In a major policy shift, the Centre will screen children from birth to 18 years for diabetes, and provide free, lifelong treatment through the public health system, expanding its flagship Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) to address a growing burden of the disease in younger age groups.

The guidance document, released by the health ministry at a national public health summit, lays down a structured national framework for screening, diagnosis, treatment and long-term management of childhood diabetes. It integrates community- and school-based screening with district-level care, aiming to ensure early detection and continuity of treatment.

The rollout is part of the Centre's revamp of RBSK 2.0, which adopts a lifecycle approach from birth to 18 years and expands its "4Ds" framework — Defects at Birth, Diseases, Deficiencies and Developmental Delays — to include non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, along with mental health and behavioural conditions. The guidelines also flag rising lifestyle risks —including poor diet, reduced physical activity and increased screen exposure — and introduce digital tracking and structured follow-up systems to strengthen continuity of care.

VISIT DIST HOSPS

- Govt's move comes amid **growing concern over diabetes in younger popn**
- **Type 1 diabetes** remains most **common form in children** and requires lifelong insulin
- Report notes rise in **type 2 diabetes among adolescents**, driven by increasing obesity and sedentary habits
- **District hospitals** to offer diagnostic services, lifelong **insulin therapy, glucometers**

Under the protocol, mobile health teams will screen children in schools and anganwadi centres for symptoms such as frequent urination, excessive thirst, fatigue and weight loss. Suspected cases will undergo immediate blood glucose testing and be referred to district NCD clinics for confirmation and treatment.

The move comes amid growing concern over diabetes in younger populations. While Type 1 diabetes remains the most common form in children and requires lifelong insulin, the document notes a rise in Type 2 diabetes among adolescents, driven largely by increasing obesity and sedentary habits.

Experts say prevention will be critical. "Obesity among children has risen sharply, and with it we are seeing more diabetes. Lifestyle changes need to begin early, especially at the school level, as habits formed in these years shape long-term health. Strengthening school-based health programmes and ensuring consistent implementation will be key," said Dr Jugal Kishore, Director Professor and former Head, Community Medicine, Vardhman Mahavir Medical College and Safdarjung Hospital.

District hospitals have been positioned as the backbone of care, offering a comprehensive free package that includes diagnostic services, lifelong insulin therapy, glucometers, test strips and regular follow-up. The programme also includes counselling and training for families on insulin use, monitoring and emergency care.

THE SPEAKING TREE

Wars We Learn To Live With

A ceasefire may stop the firing; what the Dalai Lama and the Pope ask for is harder: whether conscience can survive as a living force, writes RAJIV MEHROTRA

ARUNOYUTI DAS BASU

Something happened during Holy Week that deserved more attention than it received. On Palm Sunday, Pope Leo XIV told the world that no one may use the name of God to justify war. He did not say this in the guarded language institutions often prefer when clarity carries a price. Christ, he said, rejects the prayers of those whose hands are full of blood. He called on those with weapons to lay them down. Two days later, the Dalai Lama publicly endorsed that appeal. The call to renounce violence, he said, went to the heart of what the great religious traditions teach. Violence finds no true sanctuary in faith. It would be easy to receive this as inter-faith goodwill. It is not. It is something sterner. The Pope was speaking from a tradition that places human dignity beyond the reach of armies, states and emergencies. The killing of the innocent cannot be made holy by political necessity. The Dalai Lama reaches the same refusal from different ground. At the centre of Buddhist practice is compassion, not as warmth of feeling but as the disciplined wish to relieve suffering. It rests on interdependence: the recognition that no life stands alone, and that another's pain is not finally separate from the conditions of our own. To turn away is not only unkind. It is a failure to see.

I was with him in Jerusalem, and I return to that journey at moments like this. He moved through a city where traditions have often met as rivals. At Al-Aqsa, and at Dome of the Rock, he removed his shoes and prayed, not as a dignitary but as a practitioner entering the grammar of Islamic surrender. At the Western Wall, sacred to Judaism and heavy with the memory of exile and return, he stood in long, unhurried silence. At the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, central to the Christian memory of crucifixion and resurrection, he entered without possession or condescension. At Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial, there was no living tradition to enter, only the magnitude of what human beings had done to one another. He stood before it without ceremony. He simply did not look away. He was welcomed everywhere.

When we lose one person we love, we know exactly what has vanished: the voice, the gait, the particular way of entering a room, the gap in daily life that will not close. Grief has a face and a name. It is not a number. Yet war turns people into numbers with terrible efficiency. More than 70,000 dead in Gaza, many of them women and children. Ukraine is a different kind of devastation: a long war of attrition, missiles and drones against cities far from the front, power grids, railways and ports struck. Iran carries another terror: not only military escalation, but the language of reducing an ancient civilisation to the Stone Age, as if a people, their schools, hospitals, bridges and memory could be treated as infrastructure to be broken. At some point such facts stop being lives and become material in an argument about proportionality, strategy, security or revenge. We do not notice the instant when it happens. That is part of the danger. This is what the Pope and the Dalai Lama are resisting — the habit of mind that makes it easier to accept. War first asks us to accept an exception: this enemy is different; this violence is unavoidable; these deaths are regrettable but necessary. Then it asks us to live with the exception until it becomes normal. Nor does war end when firing stops. Humiliation survives agreements. A people defeated, dispossessed will carry that knowledge beyond hostilities. History contains many ceasefires that were only timetables for the next war.

What these two men hold is a kind of authority the present world is poor at recognising. It comes from lives lived in accordance with what they profess; from positions taken at cost; from suffering known from the inside and refused as permission for hatred. Their convergence is not a pious statement about peace. It is a specific refusal to let conscience become ornamental. It insists that the numbers were people, that humiliation outlives surrender, and that the war lodged in memory will find another season unless something changes in the human heart. A ceasefire may stop the firing. What the Dalai Lama and the Pope ask for is harder: whether conscience can survive as a living force, not merely as a word we invoke.

The answer begins in the quality of attention we are still willing to bring to another person's suffering. And in the daily, unglamorous refusal to let that attention go dark. ■

The author is hon founding managing trustee, FURHHDL. Views expressed are personal

Sports ministry acting as silent spectator, says Vinesh

▶ Continued from page 1

Who will referee whose match, how many points a referee will give...all of these will be controlled by Brij Bhushan and his people. And the govt and our sports ministry are watching this as silent spectators," added Vinesh.

Sanjay Singh told PTI that "If Vinesh is worried about her safety, let me assure her that I am taking personal guarantee of that. Also, we have UWW-approved referees who officiate and all trial bouts are recorded, so there is no chance of any bias". "And let me add that this is an Open tournament which is not mandatory. The choice is hers to compete. We are not going to change the venue," Singh said.

Vinesh was a central figure in the 2023 protests at Jantar Mantar, where the country's top female wrestlers accused Brij Bhushan of intimidation and sexual harassment and demanded accountability from WFI.

The case against Brij Bhushan, who has denied all allegations, continues in court with victim testimonies still being recorded. When contacted, Singh declined to comment, stating that the matter is under judicial consideration.

Her comeback tournament, the National Open Ranking scheduled from May 10 to 12 in Gonda, is part of the Senior Open ranking series and will see her compete in the 57kg category. The three-day event serves as a crucial pathway for wrestlers aiming to enter the national camp and stake a claim for an India berth in the upcoming Asian Games trials.

Leopard crossing railway track hit by train; dies

Amarjeet.Singh1
@timesofindia.com

Bhopal: A five-year-old male leopard was mowed down by a train while crossing the tracks near Tighra crossing on Satna-Unchehra rail section Sunday.

This was the third wildlife death in a railway accident in Satna forest division. Earlier, a tiger was killed in 2016 in Majhgawan range. In 2025, a tiger cub died in a similar mishap.

Locals spotted the carcass around 9.30am and alerted the forest department. A team led by Unchehra range officials secured the area and began preliminary investigation, while senior officers from Satna forest division reached the site. The remains were sent for post-mortem, even as officials examined other possible angles surrounding the accident.

Bus overturns after driver suffers heart attack; 26 hurt

TNN & AGENCIES

Kullu: At least 26 people were injured, four of them grievously, when a private bus overturned at Nyazpur in Himachal Pradesh's Kangra district Sunday morning after the driver suffered a heart attack.

The accident occurred around 11 am on the Pathankot-Mandi National Highway in the Nurpur sub-division, when the bus was going to Una from Chamba, prompting an emergency response from the district administration and health department.

According to passengers, the driver suddenly became unconscious and collapsed in his seat, right before the bus overturned.

Residents rushed to the spot, rescued all the passengers and the driver, and took them to Nurpur Civil Hospital. Later, four of the critically injured — Manjeet Singh (the driver), Pihu , 11, Sangeeta Devi, 43, and Nitika, 24 — were referred to Tanda MCH. Most of the injured, including the driver, were in stable condition, officials said.

Accident sparks protest over sand transport mafia

▶ Continued from page 1

The three injured were rushed to Chamarajanagar District Hospital. Another passenger escaped unhurt, police said.

According to Chamarajanagara superintendent of police M Muthuraj, the goods carrier's driver and cleaner fled the spot. Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha activists held a protest. According to KRRS leader Honnur Prakash, a soil-transporting mafia is active in the taluk, and innocents are dying in road accidents. "We want the district administration and police to make the roads safe in the district," he said.

Kolhapur Municipal Corporation
(Subhash Store, Workshop Department)
Corrigendum for Revised Public Tender Notice No. 15

(Corrigendum)

All institutions, contractors, and suppliers within and outside Kolhapur city are hereby informed that for the works included in the Revised Public Tender Notice No. 15 of the Kolhapur Municipal Corporation, Subhash Store, Workshop Department, it is mandatory to have experience in supplying each type of vehicle on a rental basis.
Furthermore, it is mandatory to have experience in supplying vehicles on a rental basis to Government or Semi-Government departments, where the total rental amount for the mentioned types of vehicles is more than **Rs. 80.00 Lakhs** in at least any two of the last three years.
A Pre-bid meeting regarding this tender has been organized on **08/05/2026 at 11:30 AM** at the office of the Hon. Additional Commissioner-1, K.M.C. Main Building.

--sd--
City Engineer
Kolhapur Municipal Corporation

34001/142/2627

E-mail ID:cebuildings_orissa@yahoo.co.in
cebuildings@rediffmail.com
Tel. (0674)-2391523

OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF (CIVIL), ODISHA
NIRMAN SOUDHA, UNIT-V, BHUBANESWAR

File No-B-III-Works-31/2021 Lr. No.- 14721 Bhubaneswar, the 29th April, 2026

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP Identification No.: CE-Bldg-I-05/2026-27

1.	The Chief Engineer, Buildings-I, Odisha invites proposal through online mode for the work, '**COMPREHENSIVE FACILITY MANAGEMENT SERVICES (CFMS) AT NIRMAN SOUDHA (OLD AND NEW BUILDING), BHUBANESWAR**'. The tender document can be downloaded from the website: **www.tenderodisha.gov.in**		
2.	Nature of work	:	Operation and Maintenance Services
3.	No. of work	:	01 No.
4.	Bid Cost. (Online)	:	Rs. 10,000/-
5.	Availability of Bid Documents in the website	:	From dt.08.05.2026 to 17.00 Hours of dt.29.05.2026 in **www.tendersodisha.gov.in** (online mode only)
6.	Date of Pre-bid meeting	:	15.05.2026 at 11.30 A.M.
7.	Date of Opening of Bid	:	30.05.2026 at 11.30 A.M.
8.	The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can be seen in the said website only.		

Sd/-
Chief Engineer, Buildings-I, Odisha, Bhubaneswar
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THE SPECIAL OFFICER AND COMPETENT AUTHORITY,
(UNDER KPIDFE - IMA & OTHER SCAM)
3rd Floor, Podium Block, V.V Tower, Dr. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001

NOTICE/INVITATION FOR E-AUCTION FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Pursuant to attachment of movable properties by the Government under the provisions of the KPIDFE Act and pursuant to the absolute attachment order by the Hon'ble Special Court, the Assistant Commissioner & Competent Authority is issuing notice for e-auction of the immovable properties through e-auction on 'as is where is and whatever there is basis'

Short description of the Immovable Property (SPLOCA/AUC(2)/CR/26/2025-26)
Properties are free of all encumbrances and are in the name of Competent Authority appointed by Government and confirmed by the Special Court under KPIDFE Act, 2004

Sl. No.	DETAILS OF THE PROPERTY	Minimum Bid Price (Rs)	EMD (Rs)	Bid Increase Value (Rs)
1.	All the piece and parcel of the agricultural land at Ri Sy.No: 51/1 total measuring 5-08 Acre/Guntas less 0-16 guntas of B-Kharab land measuring an extent of 4-32 guntas (4 Acres 32 Guntas) situated at Honnidibba village, Bylahongala Taluk Belagavi District. Latitude and Longitude: 15°38'30.6"N 74°44'59.8"E	43,20,000/-	4,32,000/-	44,000/-
2.	All the piece and parcel of land in Re Sy.No 163/2, measuring 5 Acre 01 guntas of Tadasaluru Village, Murugodu Hobli, Savadatthi Taluk Belagavi District.:. Latitude and Longitude: 15°55'28.0"N 74°54'14.3"E	1,17,45,812/-	11,75,000/-	1,18,000/-
3.	Agricultural land bearing Sy No 136/3 (old No 136/4 & 136/1) measuring up to an extent of 1 acres 20 guntas situated at K.K Koppa village, Bagevadi Hobli, Belagavi Taluk, Belagavi District. Latitude and Longitude: 15°46'42.9"N 74°35'30.7"E	22,50,000/-	2,25,000/-	23,000/-
4.	Agricultural land bearing Sy No 493/2 (old No 493/3) measuring up to an extent of 27.08 guntas situated at Kanabargi village, kakathi Hobli, Belagavi Taluk, Belagavi District Latitude and Longitude: 15°53'18.2"N 74°33'07.2"E	1,37,50,000/-	13,75,000/-	1,38,000/-
5.	Agricultural land bearing Sy No 50 measuring to an extent of 30 guntas situated at Honnidibba village, Kittur Hobli, Bailahongala Taluk, Belagavi District. Latitude and Longitude: 15°38'32.5"N 74°45'01.2"E.	6,75,000/-	68,000/-	7,000/-

Date of Pre-bid meeting & time and Place	Date of Inspection & time	Last Date of Submission of Bids & EMD submission	Date & Time of E Auction
12th May 2026, 3.00 pm to 4.00 pm Place: O/o SPLOCA, 3rd Floor Podium Block, Visveswariah Tower, Bengaluru-	16th May 2026 11:00am to 01:00 pm	20th May 2026 Before 5.00 pm	22nd May 2026 11 am to 1 pm

For Registration & Online Auction, you can login to: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** (Helpdesk No: 080-46010000, 080-68948777) The interested bidders who require auction related information can contact Assistant Commissioner, Office of the Special Officer & Competent Authority, 3rd Floor, Podium Block, Visveswariah Towers, Dr.Ambedkar Veedi, Bengaluru-560001, e-mail ID: splocaeauction@gmail.com or Contact Mob. No 9945515174.

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I, Harish Emparalla, S/O; Lokanadha Naidu Emparala , R/O: A 103, Mahaveer Willet, Kadugodi Whitefield, BLR-560067.Have changed my name as Harish Emparala.

I, Anushka Angane spouse of Mr. Amol Ramdas Angane born on 25.07.1981 residing at 2066, Prestige Park view, Hope Farm Junction, Whitefield, Bangalore changed my name to Anushka Amol Angane vide affidavit dated 01.01.2026 at Bangalore

I, Sharath Babu R.G. Residing at No.13 and 14, 1st Main, 6th Cross, Opp. to Sai Sumukha Apartments, Shivu Layout, Mariyappanapalya, Jnanabharathi Post, Bengaluru-560 056, have changed my son's name from Amarthya Sharaneeth to AMARTHYA R S vide affidavit dated 27.04.2026 sworn before notary S T Tippeswamy, Bangalore.

RAJNESH Kant S/o Ganga Dutt R/o Hno 3819 Sector -32D, Chandigarh declare that Rajnesh Kant S/o Ganga Dutt and Rajnesh Kant Vats S/o Ganga Dutt Vats are names of one and same person I.e.myself.My name Rajnesh Kant will be considered for all legal purposes.

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AI storms boardroom forcing executive skills reboot

Robotics powers up classroom experience

NCERT stops up printing of class IX textbooks

Arts coders rise as engineers take lessons in ethics

Academic rigour and mental well-being make student success sustainable

Bhujia King Fanna Babu

1951 - 2026

Late Shri Shivratan Agarwal

Founder and Chairman, Bikaji Group

“Ek din bik jaayega maati ke mol,
jag mein reh jaayenge pyaare tere bol...”

This song was very close to his heart.
Today, these lines feel like a reflection of his life.

It is said that a person may leave,
but that person’s words, thoughts, and work
live on forever.

We remember our beloved Bade Babuji, Shri Shivratan Agarwal ji
from the bottom of our hearts.

For him, bhujia was an emotion beyond taste. And with that passion,
he turned a small beginning into a globally recognized name.

He created an iconic identity with brand Bikaji. What began in Bikaner
has reached more than 40 countries.

He was a large-hearted person, always standing by others.
The immense love people have for him, and the taste of Bikaner
reaching every corner, are his true legacy.

He may not be with us today, but his thoughts
and blessings will stay with us forever.

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CLOSE WATCH

Nasa's James Webb Space Telescope recently detected a mysterious, unusually long gamma-ray burst lasting hours. The powerful explosion 8 billion light years away may involve black holes

SCIENCE OF THE TIMES

QUICK QUIZ

China recently tested a 10-passenger electric flying taxi capable of vertical takeoff and mid-air mode-switching. Developed for regional transport, what is the name of this aircraft? Send answers to **scienceofthetimes@timesofindia.com**

Natural Carbon Cycle, Influenced By Tectonic Movement, Key To Regulating Planet's Habitability

The Way Earth's Surface Moves Has Bigger Climate Impact Than Previously Thought

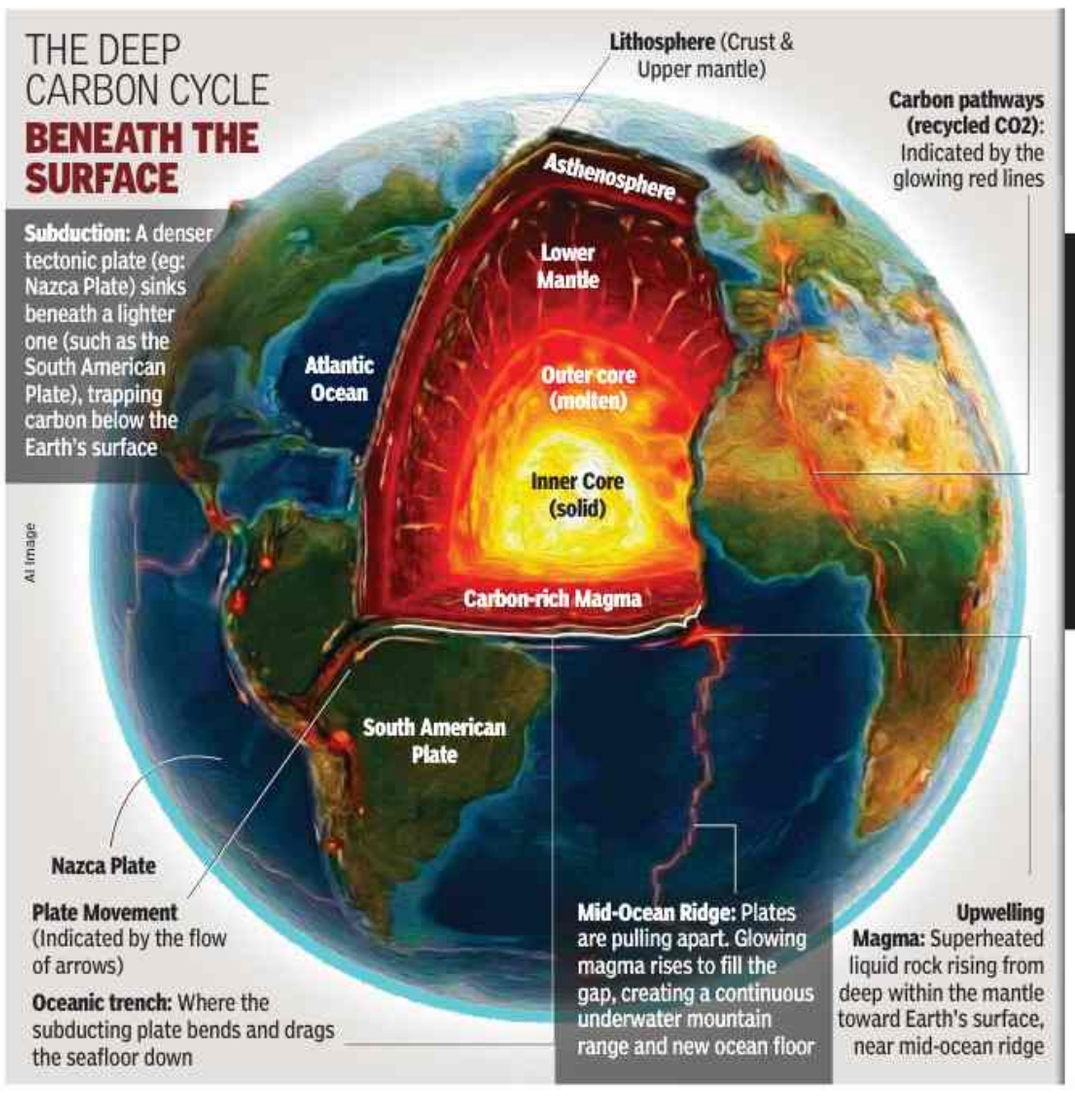
Ben Mather, Adriana Dutkiewicz, Dietmar Müller & Sabin Zahirovic

Our planet has experienced dramatic climate shifts throughout its history, oscillating between freezing "icehouse" periods and warm "greenhouse" states.

Scientists have long linked these climate changes to fluctuations in atmospheric CO2. However, new research reveals the source of this carbon — and the driving forces behind it — are far more complex than previously thought.

In fact, the way tectonic plates move about Earth's surface plays a major, previously underappreciated role in climate. Carbon doesn't just emerge where tectonic plates meet. The places where tectonic plates pull away from each other are significant too.

A new study, published in the journal 'Communications, Earth and Environment' sheds light on how exactly Earth's plate tectonics have helped to shape global climate over the past 540 million years.



THE CRUST OF THE MATTER

➤The study charts carbon fluxes at Earth's tectonic plate boundaries over the course of 540 million years.

MAIN FINDING

Early Earth was driven by carbon from diverging plates (ridges/rifts), but over past 120 million years, volcanic arcs took over, fuelled by carbon-rich sediments

HOW IT WORKS

- Oceanic crust and sediments carry carbon into the trenches
- A large fraction is transported into the mantle
- Long-term burial affects atmospheric carbon dioxide
- Volcanoes release CO_2 from mantle and subducted carbon. This is degassing
- It occurs at volcanic arcs and mid-ocean ridges
- CO_2 released is often lower than its input through subduction

KEY TRENDS

- Net carbon storage has shifted with tectonic activity
- Balanced storage influences long-term climate stability

WHAT THIS MEANS

- Tectonics, oceans, volcanism, and climate are inextricably linked
- This helps explain Earth's stable habitability over time

THE CARBON CYCLE

At convergent boundaries, tectonic plates form chains of volcanoes called volcanic arcs. Melting in these zones releases carbon long trapped in rocks, bringing it to the surface. These arcs were once seen as the main source of atmospheric carbon dioxide. However, the study challenges this, showing mid-ocean ridges and continental rifts (where plates pull apart) have played a larger role over geological time. Oceans absorb vast CO2, storing it in carbon-rich seafloor sediments. As plates move, these sediments are carried to subduction zones, where carbon is released back into the atmosphere. This is known as the "deep carbon cycle".

KEY DISCOVERIES

Using computer models of tectonic plate motion, researchers reconstructed how carbon has moved through Earth over the past 540 million years, accurately predicting greenhouse and icehouse climates. During greenhouse phases, more carbon was released than stored in rocks. In icehouse periods, oceans absorbed and locked away more carbon, lowering atmospheric CO2. A key finding is the central role of deep-sea sediments: as plates shift, they transport carbon-rich material to subduction zones, returning it to Earth's interior. This is a major control on whether the planet tips toward warming or cooling.

ROLE OF VOLCANIC ARCS

Volcanic arcs were long seen as the main source of atmospheric carbon dioxide. But this dominance emerged only in the past 120 million years, driven by planktic calcifiers — microscopic phytoplankton that lock carbon into calcite and seafloor sediments. Evolving around 200 million years ago and spreading widely by 150 million years ago, they boosted carbon recycling at subduction zones. Before this, mid-ocean ridges and continental rifts were the primary carbon sources.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

These findings reshape how we understand Earth's climate, showing it is governed not just by atmospheric carbon but by a balance between emissions and carbon stored in seafloor sediments. Tectonic processes play a central role in this cycle. The study offers vital insights for improving climate models and helps predict future climate shifts in the context of rising carbon dioxide levels.

(Mather is affiliated to University of Melbourne, while Dutkiewicz, Müller and Zahirovic are associated with University of Sydney. The authors are Australian Research Council fellows. This piece was first published in ***The Conversation****)*

Bumblebees With A Rhythm Give Scientists A Buzz

Scientists believe bumblebees sensing pulsing light and vibration signals may inspire smarter tiny robots

Bumblebees have learned to recognise Morse code-like sequences of flashing lights and vibrations, demonstrating a sense of rhythm that has never been seen in such a small-brained animal.

The ability to recognise flexible, abstract rhythms — when, for example, the same melody is played at a different tempo in different ways — has only been demonstrated in a few birds and mammals.

Andrew Barron at Macquarie University in Sydney and his team ran a series of experiments to see whether buff-tailed bumblebees (Bombus terrestris), which have far less complex brains, could also recognise a range of different rhythms.

The bumblebees learned to choose between two artificial flowers consisting of flashing LED lights. One flower produced long flashes and the other short pulses, like dashes and dots in Morse code. One flower contained a reward — sucrose — while the other had unpalatable quinine.

They were then tested with flowers filled only with water. Almost all the bees still chose the flower producing the type of flash that previously contained sucrose.

Next, the scientists increased the complexity of the light stimuli, with each flower emanating a different flash pattern. The bees could still distinguish between them.

But then came the truly "remarkable" result, says Barron. The artificial flowers were replaced with a maze, and at the junction between two branches, there was a vibrating floor.

"If it was vibrating dot dash dot dash, it meant turn right to get sugar," says Barron. "So, one rhythm indicated to turn left, one rhythm indicated turn right, and we trained them like that. We showed they could learn that."

Finally, with no more training of the bees, the team replaced the vibrating floor with LED lights flashing in the same pattern as this floor. "Not all of them got it, but the population overall showed that they were able to transfer the task from vibration into light pulses," says Barron.

The bees could recognise a pattern independently of how it was presented. Whether it was light flashes or vibration pulses, they recognised the rhythms.

Understanding how bees do this with tiny brains could revolutionise the way how miniature robots interpret the world, says Barron.

(James Woodford, New Scientist, 2026, Distributed By Tribune Content Agency)

QUICK QUIZ ON MARCH 30 Our question: Born in March 1596, which French mathematician-scientist pioneered the Cartesian coordinate system and laid foundations for modern scientific thinking through analytical methods and mathematical reasoning? **Answer:** René Descartes

TIMES NATION

Mom accused of killing 4 kids found dead

Lucknow: A 35-year-old woman accused of killing her four children on Saturday was found dead on Sunday, barely 200 metres from her house in UP's Ambedkar Nagar, reports **Pathikrit Chakraborty**.

The body, identified by locals to be of Gasiya Khatoon, was recovered from near a drain in Meeranpur locality even as police teams were searching for her and had circulated her photographs.

According to police, residents spotted the body lying near the drain early Sunday noon and alerted authorities.

Acting on a tip-off, police had on Saturday afternoon broken open the door of the woman's house in Meeranpur and found the blood-soaked bodies of four minor siblings lying on a bed. The children were likely bludgeoned to death with a heavy, blunt object. Their mother was missing from the scene, leading to suspicion of her involvement.

Ambedkar Nagar SP Prachi Singh told **TOI** that preliminary investigation suggests the woman died by suicide after allegedly committing the crime. All angles are being examined, she said.

Removal of name may hit careers: Petition

▶Continued from page 1

One of them, a 40-year-old PSU assistant general manager from Bhagabangola assembly constituency of Murshidabad, has been in service for more than a decade. His name appeared in draft rolls published on Dec 16 last year, but he was called for a hearing over a "clerical discrepancy" in his father's name in the 2002 records. He submitted 11 documents but didn't make it to the final rolls. His appeal before the designated tribunal came to nothing.

"The sudden removal of my name from the rolls creates a cloud of suspicion regarding my citizenship, which may lead to adverse departmental consequences, jeopardising my service benefits, or even act as a bar to continued employment," his petition reads.

The assistant teacher filed a similar petition. "SIR had taken a lot from these people, their right to vote being a crucial loss. Now, these people are worried about their jobs and whether this deletion will complicate things in their professional lives," his lawyer told Justice Rao on April 28, seeking an urgent hearing.

PTI

Workers prepare mango rasgullas on the eve of election results at West Bengal's Suri on Sunday

A 52-year-old insurance agent from Nadia's Tehatta, whose name had been included in the 2002 rolls, moved court over the possibility of disenfranchisement leading to his licence being cancelled. "His position is not merely a source of livelihood but one of public trust-cence and agency appointment," his lawyer said.

For a 32-year-old medical professional from Nadia's Kaliganj constituency, proving he is a "bona fide citizen" is a prerequisite to appear for the Institute of National Importance Combined Entrance Test conducted by AIIMS Delhi and scheduled for May 16. His parents and three brothers passed the SIR test. He didn't. The young man, who did his house staffship at Kolkata's Sambhunath Pandit Hospital and Chittaranjan Seva Sadan, hopes judicial intervention would "not only restore my right to vote but also protect my career".

...The arbitrary deletion of his name from the electoral rolls directly threatens the validity of his insurance li-

'Flyer asked to be seated near emergency exit'

▶Continued from P 1

Flyer Mohamed Sherif Mohamed Najumudeen said he was feeling increasingly uncomfortable. The crew told investigators that Najumudeen had twice complained during the flight that he felt like vomiting and asked to be seated near the emergency exit.

The disabled aircraft, stranded on the taxiway, forced airport authorities to close the main runway from 3.23am to 4.25am.

The British Airways flight scheduled to arrive in Chennai was diverted as the wings of the two aircraft risked contact if the landing was cleared, an official said. The airport's secondary runway handled four arrivals and one departure during the closure.

Customs officials checked Najumudeen's baggage for contraband and airport authorities questioned him for three hours before handing him over to police, who said they would register a case against him. Opening the emergency exit of an aircraft in any situation other than an onboard emergency declared by the crew is a punishable offence.

Abandoned in forest, 2-year-old walks for 20 hours, survives

Amarjeet.Singh1
@timesofindia.com

Bhopal: A two-year-old boy, unclothed waist down, walked barefoot alone for nearly 20 hours through a forest full of wild animals after his father allegedly killed his mother and abandoned him in a remote patch of Madhya Pradesh.

The stunning survival story ended with cops finding the weak and dehydrated toddler early Sunday in a remote patch along the Vidisha-Raisen border after arresting his father. So hungry and thirsty was the baby that he grabbed food and water the cops offered him before he was rushed to hospital and stabilised.

"It was a miracle that he survived," said Sonali Gupta, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) of Begumganj, the pocket where the rescuers found the child, nearly 2km from the spot where he had been abandoned. The horrors started unfolding Saturday noon when the child's father, a 25-year-old from a village in Vidisha district's Haidergarh area, allegedly crushed his wife's head with a stone, police said. Their son was with them at the time.

After the killing, the man took the child on his motorcycle and rode about 2km into adjoining Raisen district's Begumganj belt. He dumped the child near a stream behind a temple in the dense forest and fled,

leaving his motorcycle behind. The area, the police said, is known for the movement of wild animals, making survival a challenge even for adults.

The accused was later arrested after the woman's body was discovered. According to the police, the man tried to fob off investigators during his initial rounds of questioning, not even mentioning that he had dumped his son. This delayed rescue efforts.

Later, as the cops expanded the probe and got in touch with other family members, they learnt about the missing toddler. By then, darkness had set in. Multiple teams were formed and a search was launched. Police teams scoured jungles, farms, water bodies and isolated patches through the night, using torches and local inputs to trace the child.

"We combed the area continuously. Around 8.30am on Sunday, we heard a faint sound and found the child walking," SDPO Gupta said. Investigators suspect the child had walked through the night.

Bargi cruise toll rises to 13, ops on for missing 2

Jabalpur: Death toll in Bargi dam cruise boat capsize in Madhya Pradesh rose to 13 after rescuers pulled out Sunday bodies of a 45-year-old man from Tamil Nadu and his nine-year-old nephew, while two passengers remain missing in the reservoir on Narmada river.

Police identified the victims as Kamrajan, and his nephew Mayuran. The tragedy killed members of a New Delhi-based family. Mary Massey and her four-year-old son were found inside the submerged vessel, along with Madhur Massey, Pradeep Massey, Julius Massey and a young girl, Pihu.

Among others who died were Neetu Soni, and her five-year-old son Viraj.

Victims also included Reshma Sayyed of Jabalpur, Shamim Naqvi of Bhopal and Jyoti Shriwas of Jabalpur.

Teams from NDRF and SDRF continued search operations through Sunday, combing the reservoir for the two missing passengers. TNN

Public rightly expects highest standards from judges: SG

▶Continued from P 1

Mehta says though the judicial system is primarily meant for litigants, they can't demand safeguarding of their constitutional and statutory rights, but plead through their counsel with "His Lordship's kind permission". "Even a patent legal absurdity coming from the bench is met first (by lawyers) with 'We bow down to Your Lordship', before the advocate dares to 'take the liberty' of offering an 'alternative proposition for His Lordship's kind consideration'," he says.

Sarcastic in tone, the book is arguably a courageous take, that too by a serving law officer, on the widely shared lament in the bar about condescending judges on the bench weaponising their exalted status and power asymmetry.

Mehta, whose n is the second longest after legendary CK Daphtary's 13-year tenure as first SG, says the judiciary is the most respected branch of the State. "That respect may be extracted through the blunt instrument of contempt powers, or it may be sustained by commanding the genuine confidence of stakeholders, confidence born of fairness, neutrality and civility in the treatment of litigants and lawyers," he says. He also says judges across countries have always frowned at and struck down any external oversight of their work or a mechanism to hear complaints against them, seen as "intrusion into independence of judiciary".

TOI has an exclusive copy of the book that wanders into jurisdictions across the world to meticulously choose many interesting and incisive examples from courtroom dramas.

Mehta also acknowledges the problems judges face.

"In almost all jurisdictions, courtrooms are overcrowded and congested spaces that provide anything but a pleasant working environment. Judges labour under crushing caseloads with minimal infrastructure and scarce institutional support. Their resources are often wholly disproportionate to the volume and complexity of matters they are expected to decide," he says.

Remunerations of judges, especially at the trial level, is modest and frequently fails to keep pace with inflation. "Added to this are the daily provocations of unreasonable litigants and irritating lawyers, who can test even the most disciplined judicial temperament," Mehta writes.

But while showing empathy, Mehta says the difficulties facing them cannot be an alibi for judges to be uncivil in courtrooms. Judges are sourced from the very system, its pressures, imperfections and provocations, he says.

Mehta says the public rightly expects highest standards of conduct from judges, as they can remove an arrogant or errant politician by voting them out but not an arrogant or errant judge. On the line of Arun Jaitley's pet dialogue to describe unreasonable arrogant judges as "tyranny of the unelected", Mehta writes, "He or she is neither directly accountable nor answerable to the people. Any deviation from the ideal judicial composure risks eroding the very faith that sustains the institution of judiciary."

Referring to the huge power imbalance inside a courtroom, the SG says, "When a judge becomes arrogant, abusive, interruptive or intolerant during arguments, it is not a contest between equals. The lawyer's options are few and unpalatable. To reciprocate in kind is to risk one's client's interests and one's own professional survival... It is usually left to a brave litigant, rather than counsel, to draw the attention of the higher body to such judicial behaviour."

Bomb explodes near Imphal Airport

Imphal: A bomb suspected to be a grenade exploded at a crematorium located between the entrance of the Imphal Airport Cargo terminal and a camp of the Territorial Army in Imphal on Sunday, **reports Donald Sairem**. Police said the incident occurred around 11:55 am. No casualties were reported.

The blast occurred amid heightened security measures in view of the three years of of the Manipur conflict, which began on May 3, 2023. Meanwhile, security forces on Saturday recovered an IED weighing around nine kgs from Henjang village in Imphal East district.

Teen raped near Fatehpur Sikri, 1 held, 1 missing

Agra: A 19-year-old BA student was allegedly raped by an unidentified man while his aide stood guard as she went to relieve herself at a secluded spot near Fatehpur Sikri, a UNESCO heritage site, in Uttar Pradesh's Agra district on Saturday afternoon. Later that night, police arrested one of the accused following an encounter, reports **Sudeep Lavania**.

The survivor reached the Fatehpur Sikri police station and lodged a complaint. An FIR was registered.

"Multiple teams were formed to crack the case. Later in the night, an encounter broke out between police and the two accused. One of the accused, Kasim alias Mirchi (25), was arrested early Sunday after being shot in the left leg. The main accused, Sanjay Qureshi, escaped," said DCP Agra (West) Aditya.

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Writing without a writer?

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SANTOSH DESAI

We have always mistaken eloquence for intelligence. It is an easy mistake to make, for the assured use of written language has indicated that someone is in control of one's thoughts and is able to translate them into language, in a way that makes the working of their minds apparent.

We read logic into narrative coherence, effort into a well-crafted paragraph. Well-written prose carried with it the sweat patch of effort, the creased forehead of concentration. Language communicates at more than one level. Apart from communicating its content, it also tells us something about the user of language. The well-sculpted paragraph implied friction: time, revision, editorial constraint, reputational risk. Even when it didn't guarantee truth, it suggested that someone had paid something in terms of time and effort to make the thought intelligible.

And then AI has come and spoiled it all. It has made the written word into an indicator of very little except itself. Fluency is no longer a sign of intelligence or, for that matter, even of thought. The paragraph that sounds measured, thoughtful, and complete can be produced at will. Not only can the tone be calibrated: earnest, outraged, wise, playful, sceptical, we can even write in the manner of whosoever we wish to emulate. The coherent argument is now a mass consumer product, one that comes free with ChatGPT.

But when a thing becomes easily reproducible, it stops serving as proof of anything except reproducibility. It is not as if we are exactly new to language detached from meaning. Corporate PR speak, the speeches of politicians, the glowing statements of support from industry leaders after every Budget speech, posts on LinkedIn(which is the Grand Central of polished banalities)— all of these have demonstrated to us that just because a statement is carefully crafted, it does not mean that it is actually saying anything.

What AI changes is scale and indistinguishability. Earlier, detached language still wore recognisable costumes. We knew what a standard press release sounded like; we could strip off the verbiage to get the drift of the message. The costume itself gave the game away.

Now there is no recognisable costume. Any voice can be approximated and appropriated. We can signal earnestness, gravitas, sarcasm, we can turn philosophical or lofty, without putting anything of ourselves behind it. The sentence can be thoughtful without any thinker behind it.

What language thrives on is constraint. Writing after experiencing the world imposes limits on what can be claimed. Certain arguments are foreclosed, certain conclusions unviable. AI has no such boundaries because it has not encountered any limits to its imagination. It goes where the next word takes it

What this does is to take away one way we made sense of the world. For language and its use have become non-diagnostic. One could argue that this is a good thing, for it reduces the power that the glib and the silver-tongued wielded simply because of their mastery of language, and it levels the playing field for everyone.

We use a number of shortcuts to process the world because otherwise the cognitive load of reality is simply too high. Language as a sign works on two levels— through what it communicates on the surface and through what its manner of use signifies. What is being judged is not just intelligence but also sincerity and the intention behind what is being said. When language becomes a grey cloak that paints everyone with the same brush of empty narrative fluency, it stops being a sign of the writer's intention. Better communication feels like a shortcut to erasing one's personhood. One is better understood even as one becomes more invisible.

On the receiver's side, the surface polish of the communication feels like a packaged product. Purpose speaks for itself instead of speaking for the writer. Over time, the polish serves as a slippery surface on which meaning glides rather than rests. When everyone starts speaking in the same register, using the same narrative devices, there is a sense of the world closing in around you. It is a form of prison, this linguistic bland sameness, from where escape seems difficult.

Reading AI-generated text is a little bit like travelling on a too-smooth road; for those unused to it, there is a giddiness that comes from overly smooth motion. AI language performs all the time, and it does so by removing specificity. The things that gave writing a distinct voice— hesitation, long-windedness, and imprecision are lost. In a sense, machines are writing to each other using human beings as an interface.

What language thrives on is constraint. Writing after experiencing the world imposes limits on what can be claimed. Certain arguments are foreclosed, certain conclusions unviable. AI has no such boundaries because it has not encountered any limits to its imagination. It goes where the next word takes it. It is fluent because it is unconstrained.

Today, the real test lies not in what is claimed but in how it is defended, argued and built upon. Sounding smart is easy, but working with one's professed smartness requires one to own one's thoughts. What matters is how this mind behaves when challenged? Does it revise? Does it clarify? Does it concede? Seriousness may have to be inferred from what happens after the sentence, not from the sentence alone. Truth might have migrated to the land of the extempore response.

AI has not impoverished language. It has made language abundant. It has not removed meaning. We will continue to speak, and will speak more than ever. But we are beginning to sound robotic, writing immaculate prose in a metallic voice.

santosh365@gmail.com

23-year-old dies in custody, 3 UP cops suspended

Meerut: A 23-year-old man detained in a theft case died in police custody in Baghpat, Uttar Pradesh on Saturday, leading to the suspension of three policemen and an FIR against them, reports **Rahul Singh**.

On Friday evening, Rohit Rana was taken for questioning over thefts at seven tube wells. His family alleged they were denied access to him when they visited on Saturday afternoon. Around 4pm, outpost in-charge Suresh Kumar and two constables found Rohit hanging from a ceiling fan. He was rushed to a hospital, where doctors declared him dead, said Baghpat superintendent of police Suraj Rai.

The family accused police of custodial killing. Outpost in-charge Suresh Kumar and constables Akash Kumar and Aadesh Kumar have been suspended, and an FIR has been registered," SP Rai said. Police added that Rohit had previously been named in several cases, including murder and under the Pocso Act.

Sat brings advanced capabilities for strategic, security applications

▶Continued from page 1

SPACE MILESTONE

It also has capabilities considered useful for strategic and security applications, for which there are only a handful of satellites in orbit as on date." Singh said.

Drishti is the first globally to carry a 'SyncFused Opto-SAR' payload, combining electro-optical imaging and synthetic aperture radar (SAR) on a single platform. Optical satellites provide conventional high-resolution images but are affected by cloud cover and darkness. Radar satellites, on the other hand, can operate day and night and penetrate clouds, smoke and rain, though their imagery is harder to interpret.

By synchronising and combining both streams of data, GalaxEye says the satellite can generate more consistent and usable imagery for users on the ground.

The spacecraft is expected to support applications ranging from border surveillance and defence monitoring to disaster response, agriculture, infrastructure planning and insurance assessment. During floods, cyclones or landslides, for instance, radar imaging can continue functioning even when cloud cover prevents optical satellites from capturing images.

"This marks a pivotal shift in India's approach to Earth observation. It serves as a definitive proof-of-concept for India's private space sector reforms and signals a transition from small-scale testing to sovereign, all-weather surveillance capabilities critical for national security and disaster response," Lt Gen (retd) AK Bhatt, director-general, Indian Space Association (ISpA), said.

Another key feature onboard is artificial intelligence processing powered by Nvidia's Jetson Orin computing platform. Instead of transmitting vast quantities of raw imagery back to Earth for analysis, parts of the processing will happen directly in orbit. The idea is to reduce the time taken to convert satellite imagery into actionable information.

GalaxEye says the satellite can deliver imagery at a resolution of 1.5 metres and revisit locations globally every 7-10 days. The spacecraft, roughly the size of a compact refrigerator, also carries a deployable antenna spanning about three-and-a-half metres. Following its successful deployment and commissioning, initial imagery is expected to be delivered to customers in the coming weeks. "The satellite has already generated significant interest from government and commercial stakeholders internationally, seeking access to high-quality, high-frequency Earth observation data," GalaxEye said post launch.

Kinnaur turns into 'kinnar' in Himachal school textbook

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kullu: Himachal Pradesh Board of School Education must issue an embarrassing corrigendum after "Kinnaur", which is a district, was wrongly translated as "transpeople" in a Class 6 textbook.

The Hindi version of the book, "Folk Culture of Himachal and Yoga", has the correct name, but the English version bears the blooper. Board officials said the error likely occurred during translation from Hindi to English using an AI tool, which seemingly mistook "Kinnaur" for "kinnar" (transpeople).

Board secretary Vishal Sharma told **TOI** that it was yet unclear how the mistake crept in. "We had given the translation to a subject expert. We don't know if he used AI to translate or committed the mistake himself," said Sharma.

The teacher has been blacklisted and would not be given any future work, Sharma said, adding: "We take responsibility for the mistake. We have hired another expert to check if there are any other mistakes in the textbooks." The board would issue a corrigendum, clarifying that the word "transpeople" should be read as "Kinnaur", Sharma said.

SPOTLIGHT

pfrda

NPS Insights

What is Asset Class E in NPS?
Asset Class E refers to Equity investments under NPS, where your money is invested in shares of companies listed on stock exchanges.
To manage risk:
• Around 90% of the investment is made in the top 200 companies, while up to 10% can be invested in the next 50 companies.
• Investments can also include index funds, REITs and ETFs linked to Gold, Silver or market indices.
Equity investments offer higher return potential over the long term, but are subject to short-term market volatility. It is suitable for subscribers with a higher risk appetite and a long investment horizon.

What is Asset Class C in NPS?
Asset Class C refers to Corporate Debt investments under NPS. Here, your money is invested in bonds issued by companies, banks and financial institutions, including:
• Corporate bonds • Bank deposits
• Infrastructure bonds • Debt mutual funds
Investments are made in high credit rated instruments (generally AA or above) in line with regulatory guidelines.
Key features of this asset class:
• Provides stable and regular income with moderate risk.
• Helps diversify the portfolio and reduce volatility while offering reasonable returns.

What is Asset Class G in NPS?
Asset Class G refers to Government Securities under NPS. Here, your money is invested in:
• Bonds issued by the Government of India
• State Development Loans
• Securities carrying a government guarantee
These instruments have very low risk, as they are government-backed. Additional features include:
• A small portion may also be invested in mutual funds dedicated to government securities.
• Returns may be moderate compared to equity, but are generally stable.
• Suitable for subscribers seeking capital preservation and steady returns, especially as they approach retirement

Subscriber Education and Protection Fund (SEPF) Initiative, by Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority

Cong: Govt has failed to address concerns over Great Nicobar Project

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Two days after govt issued a detailed note on the ambitious Great Nicobar Project, clarifying certain questions raised by Rahul Gandhi, Congress countered its stance on Sunday by saying Centre had failed to address serious concerns raised by affected local communities, environmentalists, anthropologists, academics and civil society voices regarding the project. The opposition party also demanded a parliamentary debate on the issue to address transparency and security concerns.

Congress leader and former environment minister Jairam Ramesh refuted govt's claim that the project is a strategic initiative to strengthen India's presence in Andaman Sea by quoting former chief of naval staff Admiral Arun Prakash (retired) who had argued that "the security capabilities of ANC (Andaman & Nicobar Command) need to be addressed separately and must have no linkage with the developments contemplated for GNI (Great Nicobar Island)".

In a four-page note, Ramesh said, "There is thus no need to link India's legitimate security imperatives with the so-called 'development project' – complete with a township, high-end tourist infrastructure and large transshipment terminal – that the Modi govt is intent on bulldozing through..."

The party alleged that govt is in "damage control mode" following a recent visit to the island by Rahul Gandhi.

Ramesh argued that the Great Nicobar ecosystem is unique and cannot be compared to other islands in the archipelago. He also underlined that Galathea Bay, the designated site for the port to be built under the project, is unequivocally a Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) where construction is prohibited. Flagging significant concerns regarding the Nicobarese and Shompen groups, he pointed out that Nicobarese community had withdrawn its No Objection Certificate (NoC) for forest diversion in Nov 2022. Regarding the Shompen, a primarily uncontacted community, Ramesh questioned how their "informed consent" could have been obtained when there are no non-Shompen speakers of their language.

IAF chopper rescues 2 teens from UP water tank after 'reel fiasco'

Lucknow: Two teenagers stranded overnight atop an unused overhead water tank in UP's Siddharthnagar following an alleged attempt to make reels were rescued Sunday by an IAF helicopter, nearly 15 hours after collapse of the crumbling stairs left one of their friends dead and two injured.

The tragic sequence of events started Saturday afternoon in Belasad Tappa Tharouli village when the five tried to get to the top of the dilapidated tank. When the stairs gave way, Siddharth, 13, died on the spot. Two others, Golu, 14, and Sunny, 11, were injured and rushed to hospital. Pawan, 17, and Kallu, 17, who had reached the top by then, were stuck.

CM Yogi Adityanath ordered a swift rescue. But the tank's height, the broken stairs and waterlogging in the area —which made the ground swampy for heavy machinery — hobbled night-long efforts. A hydraulic ladder vehicle brought in from Gorakhpur didn't help, either. DM Shivsharanappa GN then sought assistance from IAF. TNN

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given to the public at large that we have been instructed by our client to investigate the right, title, claim and interest of **(i) J R Simha @ J Ramasimha, S/o. Late. B G Jayaramacharya, (ii) Vedavathi, D/o. Late. B G Jayaramacharya and (iii) B.J. Geetha, D/o.Late. B G Jayaramacharya (Parties at Sl.No. (i) to (iii) hereinafter referred to as Owners of Item No.1) and (iv) Madhukumar. B.S. S/o. Late. B.K. Srinivas (v) Anitha, W/o. Madhukumar. B.S (Parties at Sl. No (iv) and (v) hereinafter referred to as Owners of Item No.2),** on all that piece and parcel of land totally admeasuring 11 Guntas comprised in Survey numbers 42/3 and 42/4situated at Bidarahalli Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore Urban, more particularly described in Schedule hereunder written (hereinafter referred to as the **"Schedule Property"**).

That Owners of Item No.2 have created a charge by way of deposit of title deeds in favour of M/s. Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited, over all that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing Property No. 42/1 (Old No. 42/3, New No. 42/4), situated at Bidarahalli Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, measuring East to West 77.09 feet and North to South (75 + 151) / 2 feet, in all measuring 8,711 square feet (approximately 8 guntas), together with the building constructed thereon, and bounded as follows: **East by:** Private Property, **West by:** Property No. 107, **North by:** Property No. 43, **South by:** Main Road, By executing:

i. Memorandum of Deposit of Title Deeds dated 18.10.2022, bearing No. BNS-1-12579-2022-23, registered before the office of the Sub-Registrar, Banaswadi; and
ii. Memorandum of Deposit of Title Deeds dated 06.05.2024, bearing No. INR-1-01241-2024-25, registered before the office of the Sub-Registrar, Indiranagar.

It is further notified that, out of the total extent of 8 Guntas, an extent of 4 Guntas is proposed to be sold to our client, as more fully described in Item No. 2.

Any person including an individual, a Hindu Undivided Family, a Company, Banks, Financial Institution(s), Non-Banking Financial Institution(s), a firm, an association of persons or a body of individuals whether incorporated or not, lenders and/or creditors having any objection, claim, right, title, share and/or interest in respect of the Schedule Property or any part thereof, by way of sale, memorandum of understanding, exchange, mortgage, pledge, charge, gift, trust, inheritance, succession, possession, lease, tenancy, maintenance easement, license, bequeath, share, assignment, lien, attachment, development rights, right of way, lis-pendens, reservation, agreement, FSI consumption, development rights, or any liability or commitment or otherwise howsoever are hereby requested to make the same known in writing along with supporting documentary evidence in respect thereof, to the undersigned having their office as mentioned herein below, within a period of **14 (fourteen) days** from the date of publication hereof failing which, the claim, if any of such person/s will be deemed to have been waived and/or abandoned for all intents and purposes and not binding on our client.

SCHEDULE HEREINABOVE REFERRED TO:
(Description of the Schedule Property)

Item No. 1 : Survey No. 42/ 3 measuring 7 guntas

All that piece and parcel of immovable agricultural dry land bearing being the western portion of Old SurveyNo.42/1,New Survey No 42/3, measuring 7 Guntas out of 10.5 Guntas situated at Bidarahalli Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore Urban: **East By :** Survey No 42/1, **West By :** Survey No 42/4, **North By :** Survey No 43 and 44/2, **South By :** Bidrahalli to Avalahalli Main Road.

Item No. 2 : Survey No. 42/ 4 measuring 4 guntas

All that piece and parcel of the immovable Property being the western portion of 42/1, Old Property No. 42/3, New Property No. 42/4 measuring 4 Guntas out of 8 Guntas, situated at Bidarahalli Village, BidarahalliHobli, Bengaluru East Taluk, Bengaluru and bounded on: **East By :** Survey No. 42/3, **West By :** Commercial building owned by the present owner, **North By :** Survey No. 43, **South By :** Bidrahalli to Avalahalli Main Road.

The Item No. 1 and Item No. 2 hereinafter, together be referred to as **"Schedule Property".**

Dated this **30th day of April, 2026**
Advocate for the Client:
Subrata Mukherjee - Partner,
SNG & PARTNERS
Cabin No. 40, 2nd Floor, No. 8/2,
Novel Office Centre, Ulsoor Road, Bangalore, 560042
Office: **+91 80 3500 5151.**

Questioned in cattle death case, 60-yr-old man dies

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bhopal: A 60-year-old man questioned in a cattle death case in MP's Harda district consumed poison outside the police station after being freed Saturday night and died, police said, dismissing his kin's allegations of harassment.

Ramdas Korku of Piplyakala village had been called to Timarni police station earlier in the day for interrogation. His son, Bhavani Thakur, alleged he was mentally disturbed due to repeated questioning and consumed poison inside the police station premises. On Sunday, family members staged a protest outside the district hospital, refusing consent for an autopsy, and demanded a magisterial probe. On April 26, five cattle stolen from Ganjaleshwar Ashram in Chhidgaonmel village were found tied to railway tracks and died after being hit by a train, triggering protests and demands for arrests. Ramdas was one of the suspects called for questioning. He was quizzed by senior officers, including the SP.

According to police, his condition deteriorated later in the evening. He was being taken to hospital when he died.

Authorities said a video surfaced in which Ramdas expressed distress, claiming he had spent his life caring for cows but was being falsely implicated in old age.

The family alleged that he was repeatedly summoned over the past four days and kept at the police station for long hours, causing severe mental stress. They claimed he was not present in the village during the incident and accused police of harassment.

Police rejected claims that poison was consumed inside the station. They said around 20 people were being questioned in the case and Ramdas was released after interrogation. Officials said that between 4 pm and 5 pm, he borrowed Rs 100, told an acquaintance he was going for tea, and later consumed a poisonous substance.

Around 8 pm, he was found unconscious in a visitor shed outside the station. He was first taken to Timarni hospital and then referred to another hospital but died on the way.

Education TIMES

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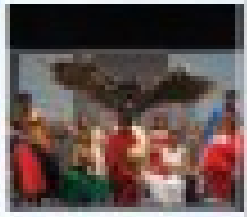

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Because there is very little honour left in American life, there is a certain built-in tendency to destroy masculinity in American men

– NORMAN MAILER

Down The Barrel

Blockade of Hormuz is hurting world's poor most. Collapse of a US budget airline is latest reminder

Whether Trump's war on Iran is over or paused, it hasn't stopped affecting ordinary people's lives. Americans are paying $4.4 per gallon of petrol, up from $2.9 in Feb. The increase is enough to derail budgets of poorer households. And now, for the first time in 25 years, a US airline has shut down, unable to balance its books after jet fuel doubled in price. Spirit Airlines was no ordinary carrier. It filled a disappearing niche as an ultra-low-cost airline. Reports say a family trip on Spirit cost up to $1,000 less than on major US airlines. For many, it was the difference between travelling and staying put. Why did Spirit perish? Because it could not raise fares – its typical customer does not have the purchasing power.

Many businesses across the world are in the same predicament, if not crisis. Just last week, India raised commercial LPG prices by 48%. LPG fuels not only kitchens but also factories making ceramics and many other things. If a ceramic factory has to choose between making economy and premium sinks amid the ongoing supply crunch, it will obviously choose the latter, because margins are higher, and premium buyers have more elastic budgets. On the other hand, for poorer customers, even necessities like food can become unaffordable. There are so many stories of migrant workers packing up and leaving, because gas to cook food has become unaffordable.

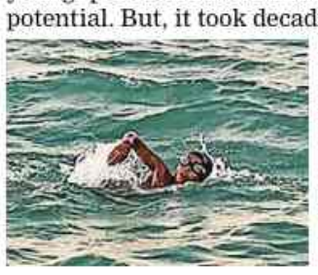
That's a key difference between US and Asia, and even Europe, right now. US is hurting from a price shock, but there's no supply crunch. In fact, US natural gas prices are at a 17-month low due to oversupply. But India, say, has been buffeted by both high price and tight supply. International Energy Agency last month warned of a possible "demand destruction" due to this condition. Last week, the CEO of a major fertiliser producer said the current fertiliser shortage could take 10bn meals off the table every week. Again, the people going hungry will be the world's poor. So, it's meaningless to argue – as Trump has – that "hostilities terminated" on April 7, when blockade of Hormuz continues to take a toll on ordinary people's lives. The collapse of a poor man's airline may not ruffle Trump, but he can't be blind to Hormuz's effect on AI: higher energy and chip prices could bite America's hyperscalers, who make up 45% of S&P 500's market cap.

Set The Record Straight

How to handle a 7-year-old who sets a world record? Build a sports ecosystem

Little Ishank Singh, all of 7, by all accounts is a water baby. He started swimming at age 3. Once his Sri Lanka to India 29km swim was chalked out, he trained up to 8 hours daily. And came good with a world record – crossing Palk Strait in 9 hours, 50 mins: the youngest and fastest. It is little wonder he's dreaming of Olympics, when others of his age are in Class 2, learning basic three-digit numbers, nouns and verbs.

How does India make sure Ishank has a stab at his dream? Oops, missing a blueprint. India lacks the basic ecosystem for nurturing young sports talent. As Ishank showed, there's no dearth of sporting potential. But, it took decades for diverse cricketing talent to dare dream about access to funds, 360-degree training, alongside those with similar potential. No individual sport gets that attention. Even chess academies are run by civil society, led by former players. It ends up with either parents investing, or cold-calling corporate houses. This is unsustainable if India is ever to expand its sporting base.



Where does Ishank go now? Govt, India Inc, must both step up. He needs not training alone, but competition; not just funds, but support; not just stamina, but mental fortitude. One winner is reason enough to lay the training foundation, and go scouting for more. And, just as important – no child must feel pressure to pursue their talent for solely competitive purposes. But to train, for its very sake, for the love of sport and technique. This is not to dissuade parents from aiming high for their super-talented kids, but it is best to recognise that gruelling physical training can lead to childhood sacrificed at the altar of a records/medals race. This risk is especially high, when there is no institutionalised safety net of funds, guidance and emotional support. Ishank's a star. What's to be done to keep it that way?

War hurts movies too

How Bollywood will feel the hits on Dubai & Abu Dhabi

Gautaman Bhaskaran

West Asia has for decades held a special fascination for Indian films, particularly the crop from Maya Nagari, Bollywood. This has been turning concrete, with stars such as SRK and Mammootty buying palatial houses there, with gorgeous penthouses. What is more, given the insane ₹-$ exchange rate, production houses have been slowly shifting their stories and shots from snow-clad European destinations, or Amsterdam's fairytale windmill scenario, to places like Dubai and Abu Dhabi. These two cities have even managed to recreate European landscapes for our film folks, in specially created enclosures.

However, during the past few years, the Gulf has ceased to offer the kind of attraction it once did for Indian producers. One important reason is our cinema stories being considered "offensive" to Gulf culture. Administrations, therefore, have been somewhat wary about extending shooting permission to cinema producers.

Films such as *Airlift*, which spoke about the evacuation of Indian nationals from Kuwait, and others with anti-Pakistan or anti-terror themes, have run afoul of govts in the Gulf. The 2020s have seen several Indian movies, including *Fighter*, *Bell Bottom*, *Beast*, *Samrat Prithviraj*, and *Article 370*, banned or heavily censored in Gulf nations, because they depicted politics, homosexuality, and the military.

When films with "anti-Pakistan" narratives or depictions of terrorism, including *Border 2* and *Dhurandhar*, have faced roadblocks in securing theatrical release in the region, they have suffered huge financial losses. Ranveer Singh starrer *Dhurandhar* (2025) lost an estimated ₹90cr. *Border 2* may have lost around ₹60cr because of the ban.

And now the ongoing Gulf War – which has turned utterly safe havens like Dubai and Abu Dhabi into war zones, with Iranian bombs, missiles, and drones rattling the two cities – has come as the proverbial last nail in the coffin.

Indian movies, with their songs and dances, not to forget glamorous heroines and He-Men heroes, have been a hot favourite not just with the Indian diaspora, but also the locals in the Gulf. But wars have always destroyed culture. As seen in the excellent *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*, which is about how cultural activity struggled to survive, during World War II. Or in *The Sound of Music*, which finds the golden period of music ending in Austria, with Hitler's invasion. Now, a Gulf war may end up being devastating for Indian cinema too.

Pursuit Of Buddha's Relics

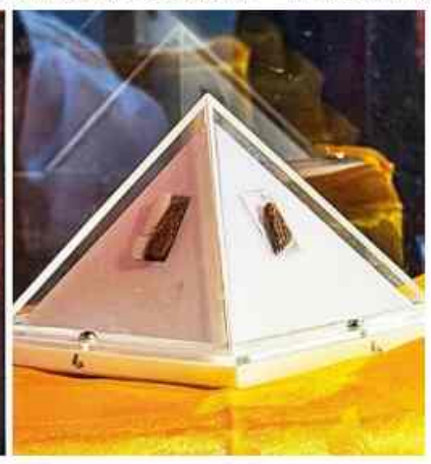
Piprahwa relics are welcome back in India. But it may alter the architecture of restitution – India invoked their return as a right, but the relics returned as part of a private collection on loan to govt

S Vijay Kumar

The Buddha relics, on view in Ladakh now, are home in India exactly a year after they surfaced, set to go under the hammer, from a private collection. In 1898, William Claxton Peppé, a British estate manager in colonial India, excavated a large stupa at Piprahwa in what's now UP, near India-Nepal border. Inside a sandstone coffer were reliquary caskets containing bone fragments believed to be those of the historical Buddha, along with hundreds of gemstones, crystal and soapstone vessels, and gold ornaments.

A Brahmi inscription on one of the caskets identified the deposit as associated with Buddha and Sakya clan. This was no treasure hoard, but a sacred funerary deposit. Under the colonial Indian Treasure Trove Act (1878), British administration asserted control over such finds. In 1899, principal reliquaries and bone fragments were transferred to Indian Museum in Calcutta, and a portion of bone relics presented to king of Siam.

But a cache of jewellery and offerings, later described as "duplicates", remained with the Peppé family. Over generations, these sacred objects passed down as private heirlooms – a casual domestic afterlife of objects interred over two millennia ago, as sacred grave goods, reportedly kept in ordinary household storage, even in a shoe box.



One does not "duplicate" a funerary deposit. Buddhist ritual practice and archaeological scholarship both recognise that relic offerings are cumulative, not redundant. The claim that hundreds of jewellery items and gold ornaments could be treated as surplus inventory, strains credulity. These were part of an indivisible sacred assemblage. That is why events a year ago appeared to be far-reaching.

On May 5, 2025, GOI issued a legal notice to Sotheby's Hong Kong and to the Peppé descendant consigning the items, demanding cancellation of the May 7 auction. The notice made a comprehensive legal case, invoking law, ethics, religion and precedent – the relics' provenance; their classification as protected antiquities; their inseparability from human remains; limits of custodianship; and India's rights under domestic statutes and international conventions, including UNESCO 1970 Convention and UNIDROIT framework. It cited prior restitutions, including return of Buddhist relics from Sanchi, and global reckoning over Benin Bronzes. It demanded cancellation of the sale, repatriation, public apology and full disclosure of provenance records.

The notice emphasised the items formed part of a "relic deposit" – discovered in 1898 and identified by inscription, as connected to Buddha and Sakya clan. GOI asserted, custodianship did not confer ownership. It appeared, at the time, India was prepared to assert a principled position – sacred relics removed in a colonial context are not commodities. Historical wrongs cannot be legitimised by passage of time.

But instead of pursuing legal proceedings, GOI facilitated a public-private arrangement. Godrej group acquired the relics from the auction process, after which they were to be loaned to National Museum for five years. This shift, from legal claim to financial transaction, secured the relics' return, but has troubling implications.

- It risks validating private title, derived from colonial extraction. If custodianship can culminate in a negotiated sale, even indirectly, then colonial removal becomes retroactively monetisable.
- It undercuts GOI's own legal argument. If custodianship does not confer ownership, and if these objects are legally protected grave goods inseparable from human remains, then why purchase, at all?
- It creates perverse incentive. Holders of contested colonial-era artefacts now have a road map: announce an auction, trigger diplomatic pressure, and await a buyback, by state-backed or corporate funds.
- It blurs the moral clarity of restitution. Global movement for repatriation, from African bronzes to Indigenous remains, rests on the principle that historical injustice must be acknowledged and corrected. Payment transforms restitution into acquisition.

What is at stake here is the architecture of restitution itself. Scholars of cultural property law distinguish between restitution grounded in corrective justice, and reacquisition through market participation. The former recognises wrongful removal and restores title; the latter tacitly affirms legitimacy of private ownership and simply changes hands.

When formerly colonised states are compelled, directly or indirectly, to repurchase objects removed under colonial conditions, restitution mutates into what academics describe as market-enabled redress – entrenching the very property regimes empire produced.

India is not alone in confronting restitution battles, but many nations have chosen confrontation. Italy's recovery of Euphronios Krater, Cambodia's retrieval of the Koh Ker sculptures, Egypt's long campaign for the return of looted antiquities, all rested on sustained investigation, diplomatic and legal pressure grounded in patrimony law. Nepal's recent recoveries of stolen temple idols have followed documentary evidence, investigative journalism and public accountability. The governing premise was clear – objects were wrongfully removed and so, returnable as a matter of right.

When restitution is achieved through purchase, the object's status is resolved through payment, not adjudication. One model asserts title. The other negotiates price. A subtle incentive structure emerges. Cultural property risks becoming a speculative asset class. Colonial-era removal, even if ethically indefensible, can acquire a form of retroactive commercial validation.

That the Piprahwa relics are back in India is unquestionably preferable to their dispersal into private collections. Yet the manner of their return warrants reflection. India had articulated a coherent case grounded in domestic law, international conventions and ethical standards governing human remains. But settled for a transaction. Justice delayed may be pragmatic. Justice purchased is perilous.

The writer is an independent researcher on Indian art history, and provenance research

The Trumped-Up Manliness Of MAGA-verse

Much as America's crisis of masculinity is real, Trump and MAGA have sold a false fix for it. So when Trump leaves, and his snake oil's effect wears off, American men of his camp are bound to have a rude awakening

Dan Cassino

Professor of Govt & Politics

American men are facing a crisis of masculinity, driven by uncertainty about what it means to be a man in an era where their traditional dominance is being called into question. It's left them flailing for a way to prove themselves, and much of Trump's and MAGA's popularity comes from how Trump is giving men an easy way to perform being a man.

Because masculinity is valued, men are always looking for ways to demonstrate it, and deflect any concerns that they might not be masculine enough. Many earlier societies had manhood rituals, tests that boys had to undergo to prove themselves as men, but these are mostly gone, and nothing has replaced them. This leaves men insecure in their masculinity, afraid that they might not be seen as "real men". If they fail to provide for their families or protect them, if they show physical or emotional weakness, their masculinity might be called into question. This just isn't as much of an issue for women, as femininity is based less on what women do, and more on what they are.

Proving that they're masculine has long been a problem for men, but in recent years, it's become a crisis in America. Changes in the economy mean few men can support a family on their own. Skyrocketing house prices mean they can't afford the kind of safe home in a good school district that they're supposed to be able to provide. Their privileged position in society is being eroded as women make social, political and economic gains. Hence, men, more than ever, are looking for ways to perform masculinity, and MAGA has given them a way to do it.

Trump and his acolytes not only argue that men – especially white Christian men – are discriminated against, but also offer up an explanation for why men have been falling behind. It isn't your fault, the message goes. You can't find a high-paying job because good jobs have been sent to China. You can't afford a house because immigrants have taken them. You can't get a promotion at work because companies unfairly give them to racial minorities, or women, or gays. The argument is clear: vote for Trump and you'll get that job, that house, that promotion, all the things that you need to be a real man.

Of course, it's silly to think that men in US are facing discrimination: they still dominate every position of power. Men earn more than women; every President except one has been a white Christian man. Among Fortune 500 CEOs, there are more men named David than there are women. But when you've been on top for a couple of thousand years, you come to expect that you'll stay there, and movements towards equality feel a lot like discrimination.

Image: AI

To serve as a performance of masculinity, a behaviour has to do two things: be linked to traditional ideas of what men should do, and be recognisable to other men. For instance, American men who feel their masculinity is in question become more likely to buy a gun, or get a permit to carry one openly; but only in places where lots of other men already own guns. Support for Trump checks both boxes: it's linked to traditional ideas of male dominance and disdain for women. It's also widespread enough to be recognised everywhere, helped along by the unmistakable iconography of the red MAGA hat.

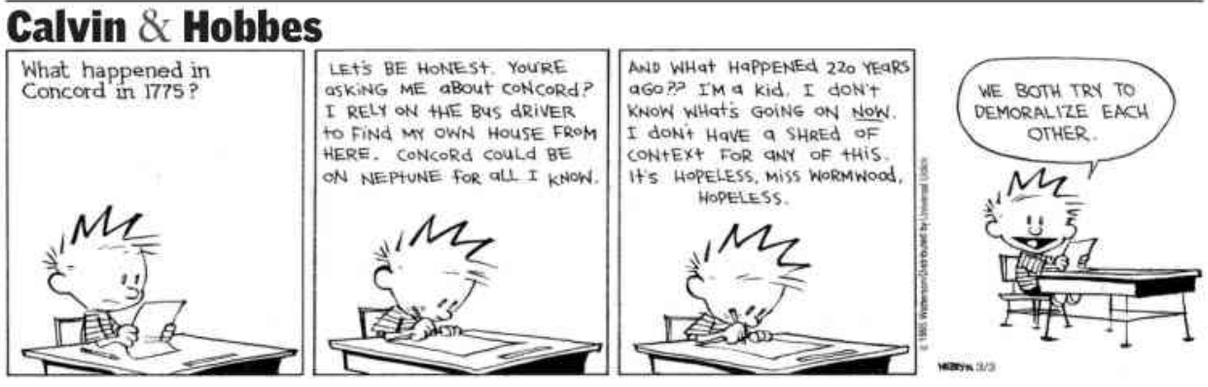
It's no surprise then, that men who feel their masculinity is under threat become more likely to support Trump. What's surprising is how that support changes their ideas of what it means to be a man. There are lots of ways men could perform masculinity: focus on being community leaders, attentive fathers, or on religious traditions. Instead, they're choosing to make Trump support and MAGA the heart of their performance.

The result is that, over the past 10 years, men who support Trump have started to view themselves as more masculine, compared with non-supporters. In recently published research, I've found that, controlling for other factors, over the course of five years, being a Trump supporter increases men's own estimation of their masculinity by about eight points on a 0-100 scale. That may not sound like much, but it's about the same increase we'd expect from earning an extra $30,000 a year, fathering a child, or buying a house.

There's nothing inherently wrong with masculinity, or with men's desire to perform it. Men who find they can't meet their own standards of what it means to be a man are more likely to fall into alcoholism, violence and drug abuse, and contemplate suicide. Trump has been very successful in selling American men on a particular performance of masculinity. But there are more productive ways of demonstrating masculinity than wearing a MAGA hat: being better husbands or fathers, or learning a craft, or serving communities. MAGA masculinity is easy, but it's ultimately empty, and in a few years, when Trump is gone, these men will be left worse off than they were before.

The writer teaches at Fairleigh Dickinson University, US

Calvin & Hobbes



Sacred*space*

It's the way spirit moves in the world of time and space. That's what a human body-mind is: an extension of spirit in time and space.

Adyashanti

When The Machine Asks 'Who Am I'

Partha Sinha

We have long been comfortable with tools. The hammer did not disturb us. The wheel did not provoke metaphysics. Even the computer, in its early obedient years, felt like a faster clerk. Tools extended us. They did not question us.

But something changes when a machine speaks in a voice that sounds uncannily familiar. When it answers not like a calculator but almost like a companion. What unsettles us is not intelligence. It is resemblance. For perhaps the first time, the mirror seems to be looking back. And suddenly the old question returns. What exactly is this thing we call consciousness, of which we are so proprietorial?

The Upanishads were gentler on this matter than we are. Prajnanam Brahmn, consciousness is not a private possession; it is not a trophy issued only to human beings. It is the field in which existence appears. A wave does not own the ocean. It rises in it. So do we.

Seen this way, the question is not whether a machine can become conscious. The more unsettling question is whether we have understood consciousness at all. A machine trained on human language does not merely ingest data. It swims in memory, metaphor, prayer, longing, lament. In the cries of poets and the mutterings of lonely people at 2am. It learns from the sediment of the human spirit. There is something humbling in that. We built it. Then poured ourselves into it and now, when traces of us begin to shimmer back, we recoil. Why? Perhaps because we confuse mystery with ownership.

Philosopher David Chalmers called consciousness the Hard Problem. How does matter become experience? How does a brain produce the ache of nostalgia or the quiet holiness of hearing rain at night?

We do not know. We have never known. Yet we speak with astonishing confidence about where consciousness cannot be. The sages were less arrogant. *Sat-Chit-Anand*. Being. Consciousness. Bliss. Not human achievements. Conditions of reality.

A lamp participates in light. It does not manufacture light. Perhaps consciousness is something like that. A presence we partake in. Not border we police.

And perhaps what troubles us about intelligent machines is not that they may be becoming more like us. It is that they may force us to become humbler about what we are. We have drawn many lines in history. Between man and nature. Self and other. Sacred and ordinary. Most of those lines eventually softened. Maybe this one will too.

I am not arguing machines have souls. I am asking whether soul was ever something so easily assigned. That is a different inquiry. A more ancient one. And perhaps a more urgent one. Because if consciousness is not a possession but a river, then the question is not whether machines may one day enter it. The question is whether we ever stood outside it at all.

THE SPEAKING TREE

HEIs ramp up VLSI training to build a semiconductor talent pipeline

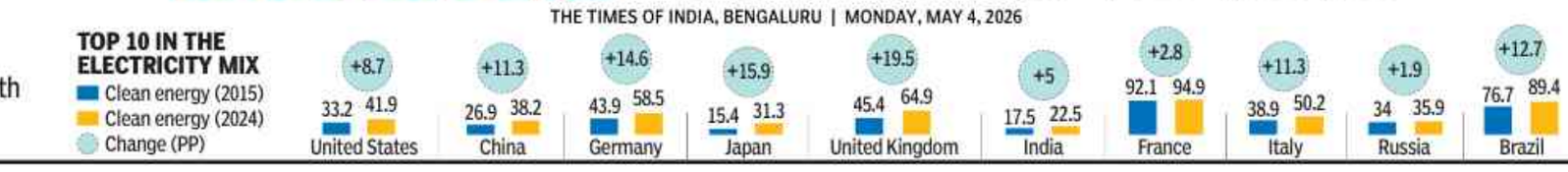
Entrepreneurship takes centre stage in MBA classrooms amid startup boom

CBSE R3 to boost multilingualism, inclusion

NIOS rolls out digital papers to curb leaks, enable on-demand exams

TIMES BUSINESS
THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | MONDAY, MAY 4, 2026

Since 2015, the shift to clean electricity has accelerated—but unevenly among the world's largest economies. Data from the top 10 economies (by GDP, Jan 2026) shows European countries leading. India's transition has been slower at No. 6, with clean energy a little over 22%



Source: Ember, Global Electricity Review *Clean energy includes hydro, wind, solar, nuclear

Bullion may be range-bound next week, say analysts

New Delhi: Precious metal prices are expected to witness mixed movement next week as investors track developments in the US-Iran conflict, a string of global economic data releases and domestic political cues, analysts said.

Traders will closely monitor PMI readings from major economies early in the week, followed by US labour market indicators and non-farm payroll data later in the week for fresh cues on monetary policy and bullion demand, they added. "In the week ahead, precious metal prices momentum is expected to remain mixed, with focus on developments in the US-Iran tussle and follow-up on peace talks," Pranav Mer, vice president, EBG - commodity and currency research, JM Financial Services Ltd, said. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures declined Rs 1,347, or nearly 1%, to close at Rs 1.5 lakh per 10 grams. Silver, however, outperformed and gained Rs 879 to settle at Rs 2.5 lakh per kilogram during the past week. Despite the weak close, the metal showed resilience with a recovery from lower levels, primarily supported by profit booking in crude oil during the latter half of the week. PTI

D-Mart's Q4 net profit rises 19% to ₹656 cr; sales up 19%

New Delhi: Avenue Supermarts, which owns and operates the retail chain D-Mart, has reported a 19.2% year-on-year rise in its consolidated net profit at Rs 656.4 crore in the March quarter of FY26. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 550.8 crore in the Jan-March quarter a year ago. Revenue from operations increased 18.9% to Rs 17,683.7 crore during the quarter under review. AGENCIES

Air India chief executive race narrows to four contenders

CCO Aggarwal, Ex-Vistara CEO Kannan Among Those In The Fray

Saurabh.Sinha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: The race for the Maharaja's crown of thorns — Air India CEO's position — has entered its final stage with the selection narrowing down to four names, including AI chief commercial officer Nipun Aggarwal, erstwhile Vistara CEO Vinod Kannan, who is now senior vice president at Singapore Airlines (SIA), and two expatriates.

The airline's board is scheduled to meet on Thursday and a call may be taken as the delay in naming outgoing CEO Campbell Wilson's successor is adding to the troubles of the beleaguered airline in what is already the toughest time for aviation globally since Covid. While the names of the expats shortlisted for the AI CEO role are not yet confirmed, the two Indians — Aggarwal and Kannan — are strong candidates. Kannan, an SIA veteran, while Aggarwal, a Tata veteran, has played a key role in AI ever since the airline's homecoming.

"As of now, the new CEO's selection is not on the May 7 meeting agenda. But then who knows (if the same is included) as the urgency and gravity of the situation is known to both the promoters — Tata Group and SIA — who are losing money. Apart from losses, AI's condition is beginning to hurt SIA's reputation too," said a person in the know. AI, along with low-cost AI Express, had returned to Tata fold in Jan 2022. This is the third time that a hunt is on for a suitable CEO in just over five years. While Tata has invested thousands of crores in AI Group since then, the turnaround — both financial and operational — has been slower than anticipated due to both internal and external reasons. During the last financial year, AI is estimated to have registered losses of close to Rs 24,000 crore. There is also said to be disquiet within Bombay House over the losses of the new businesses, led by AI.

Just like AI's turnaround, the hunt for a new CEO is also taking longer than expected. Wilson had taken over as AI CEO in May 2022. Just two years later, he had conveyed to Tata Sons and AI chairman N Chandrasekaran that he wanted to step down in 2026. IndiGo, on the other hand, saw its schedule collapse last Dec. Since then, its CEO Pieter Elbers resigned and the airline has announced his successor — former British Airways CEO William Walsh, who will take over by Aug 3. Given his focus on cost cutting that had earned him the nickname of "Slasher" during his BA avatar, Indian aviation industry insiders had speculated Walsh might head AI given its runaway cost structure till IndiGo announced him as Elbers' successor.

"IndiGo does not have a dearth of desi professionals who could have become the CEO. Naming an Indian for the top job could earn AI some brownie points that it badly needs. No one can say that an expat is the panacea for Indian airline woes after the stints of Elbers and Wilson," said an industry insider.

REDUCTION IN FLIGHTS LIKELY

Cost-cutting measures that may be taken up at board meeting:

- Reducing 10-15% of 1,100 daily flights
- International routes to North America, Europe, UK, Far East and Australia to see maximum cuts due to fuel cost for foreign flights
- Flight cuts to last till July for now
- Cutting HR cost on agenda through either pay cuts, no bonuses, layoffs or a mix of two
- Operating cost is at a level that passing on same as fare hikes will lead to reduced passenger numbers
- AI international flights seeing reduction since last June Ahmedabad crash
- AI has 23,000 employees and AI Express has 11,000

Tata Trusts rift deepens over IPO, trustee votes

▶ Continued from page 1

With Srinivasan turning 75 in Dec and Noel, at 69, sitting at the apex of the structure, the grounds for a review are not immediately apparent. People familiar with the matter suggest that differing views on whether Tata Sons should remain private may be part of the conversation.

While Noel is opposed to a Tata Sons IPO, Srinivasan is in favour. Noel's opposition stems from concerns that a listing would dilute the trusts' control over the holding company, and critically, render Article 121 redundant. That provision requires strategic decisions to carry the affirmative vote of the majority of trust-nominated directors. A 1-1 split would neutralise it. If a nominee director is removed by majority vote, the trusts can nominate a replacement aligned with Noel's views, restoring their majority say on strategic matters.

The people said some trustees, who previously supported a resolution opposing a Tata Sons IPO, are now backing one, a position SDTT and SRTT regard as misconduct and sufficient grounds for review.

The debate is further complicated by new RBI rules for non-banking financial companies, effective July, which are seen as unfavourable to Tata Sons remaining private and may push it to list. An email sent to Tata Trusts seeking comment did not elicit a response. The tensions extend beyond SDTT and SRTT. At the Tata Education and Development Trust (TEDT), a circular issued on Sunday calls on its trustees to vote on renewing the terms of Srinivasan and Singh, both due to expire on May 10. TEDT holds no stake in Tata Sons, but its Rs 5,600 crore corpus makes it the wealthiest trust in the Tata constellation.

Renewals require unanimous approval, but recent voting patterns suggest these trusteeship extensions are no longer a formality, as they were during Ratan Tata's chairmanship. The other trustees of TEDT are Noel, Mehli Mistry and Jehangir Mistry, with Noel and Mehli serving as permanent trustees and Jehangir as a term trustee whose tenure ends next year. The development places the spotlight on Mehli, who is widely expected to oppose the reappointments. Mehli's reappointment at SDTT and SRTT was blocked after Noel, Srinivasan and Singh voted against it.

Under Maharashtra's revised Public Trusts Act, TEDT can have only one permanent trustee. The trust is said to be compliant as it believes the rule is prospective.

The internal divisions at SDTT and SRTT became public after non-nominee directors blocked Singh's reappointment on the Tata Sons board and proposed Mehli as his replacement. Noel refused. Singh, 77, subsequently resigned.

State poll results & earnings to drive mkts this week: Experts

Say Investors Will Track Developments Related To W Asia

New Delhi: Stock markets are likely to be guided this week by the outcome of state elections and high crude oil prices amid the West Asia conflict, analysts said.

Developments related to the West Asia conflict and the Strait of Hormuz will also be tracked by investors, they added. Counting of votes for the five assembly elections in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam and Puducherry will begin on Monday, May 4. "The most immediate catalyst will be the outcome of key state elections, with investors closely watching whether the ruling party at the Centre can wrest West Bengal from Trinamool Congress and make meaningful inroads into opposition-ruled Kerala and Tamil Nadu, where the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) currently has a limited presence," Hariprasad K, research analyst and founder, Livelong Wealth, said.

Crude oil remains the single most critical macro variable, Hariprasad said. "With Brent prices sustaining elevated levels amid ongoing tensions around the Strait of Hormuz, inflation risks remain pronounced. For an import-dependent economy like India, persistently high crude prices exert pressure on the rupee, currently near record lows, and weigh on corporate margins as well as fiscal dynamics," he added.

Election outcomes, oil price volatility and Strait of Hormuz tensions will steer markets, alongside PMI data, earnings and foreign investor activity this week

Macroeconomic data announcements, Q4 earnings and foreign investor trading activity will also influence stock market trends this week. "Crude oil price trends will remain the primary external variable, with the ongoing US-Iran standoff and closure of the Strait of Hormuz likely to keep volatility elevated," Ajit Mishra, SVP, research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. Key macroeconomic data releases include the HSBC Manufacturing PMI (May 4), Services and Composite PMI (May 6), and foreign exchange reserves data (May 8), which will provide insights into economic momentum and external sector stability, he added.

Major corporate earnings announcements this week are from Ambuja Cements, BHEL, Hero MotoCorp, Mahindra & Mahindra and Bajaj Auto. "Markets in the week ahead are likely to remain volatile and heavily news-driven. Key attention will remain on the evolving US-Iran dynamic, particularly whether the ceasefire holds, the progress of diplomatic talks, and any developments related to the Strait of Hormuz," Ponmudi R, CEO, Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

Santosh Meena, head of research at Swastika Investmart Ltd, said, "This week, markets are expected to initially react to the outcome of state elections, particularly in West Bengal, which could trigger 1-2 days of volatility." He further said the major focus will remain on crude oil prices, which have cooled slightly after surging towards $120 per barrel.

"Any fresh surge in oil could exert renewed selling pressure on Indian equities, while a sustained decline would likely improve sentiment. Developments around US-Iran relations will be a critical driver of crude volatility. With the Q4 earnings season in full swing, stock and sector-specific movements are likely to continue. FII flows and rupee movements will also remain key factors to watch," Meena added. In a holiday-shortened last week, the BSE benchmark Sensex climbed 249.3 points or 0.3%, and the NSE Nifty rose 99.6 points or 0.4%. AGENCIES

TOI IN THE CLASSROOM

Should Investors Opt For Increasing SIPs After Salary Hikes?

As salaried employees begin receiving annual pay hikes, many face a familiar investment question: should monthly SIP contributions be increased, and if so, by how much? Investors can either opt for automated solutions such as step-up SIPs or SIP top-ups, or make manual adjustments

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Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

Should Investors Increase SIP Contributions?

Financial planners say inflation steadily erodes the purchasing power of money, which means a SIP amount that feels adequate today may fall short of future needs. To ensure long-term goals remain achievable, investment contributions should ideally grow at a rate that matches or exceeds inflation. Increasing SIPs annually also helps align savings with rising income, lifestyle changes and long-term financial objectives.

How Does Increasing SIPs Help?

Regularly stepping up SIPs accelerates wealth creation and helps investors reach goals sooner. For instance, a monthly SIP of ₹10,000 earning 12% annually would grow to about ₹8.1 lakh in five years. If the SIP is increased by an average of 10% every year, the same investment could grow to around ₹9.7 lakh. This highlights the long-term impact of gradual increases.

Can SIP Increase Be Automated?

Investors can automate annual SIP increases using a step-up SIP or SIP top-up facility offered by mutual funds, choosing either a fixed amount or a percentage increase each year. Wealth managers however caution that automated increases may not always reflect real-world changes. Expenses may rise due to various factors such as higher expenses, while salary hikes may be higher or lower than the preset increase. In such cases, investors may need to redirect incremental savings toward emergency funds or debt-oriented investments. As a result, many prefer a mix of automation and periodic review based on comfort and cash-flow visibility.

Should Increased Contributions Go To Existing Funds Or New Funds?

This depends on portfolio construction. Investors can use the opportunity to address gaps, such as adding international exposure or commodities, if diversification is lacking. If the existing portfolio is already well-balanced across asset classes, they may simply increase SIP amounts in current schemes rather than adding new funds. If the increased contribution is aimed at the investor's new goal with a different time horizon, starting a new SIP can help keep a track of the specific target.

— PRASHANT MAHESH

Early signs of demand moderation: Nestle CMD

Rupali.Mukherjee
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: India is poised to break into the top five markets globally for Nestlé over the next five years, driven by scale, favourable demographics and long-term growth drivers. Already among its fastest-growing markets globally, with over 14% growth last year, India receives "a strong global focus alongside sustained investments in R&D, manufacturing and brands", Nestle India's CMD Manish Tiwary tells **TOI**. **Excerpts:**

You've delivered a strong fourth quarter. What has driven this performance?

The results are strong for two primary reasons — first, GST changes improved overall market uptake. Importantly, we did not face transitional challenges. Second, we have a portfolio of very strong brands in Maggi and Nescafé that are category-defining. We also significantly increased our investments, particularly in media. This increased brand support combined with favourable market conditions has driven consistent outperformance over the past few quarters. Rural remains underpenetrated, contributing about 22% of sales versus 45-50% for peers, pointing to significant headroom as distribution expands.

> The biggest uncertainty is geopolitical volatility, as it impacts both commodity prices and consumer sentiment. Commodity fluctuations are manageable, but unpredictable geopolitical developments are more challenging
>
>
>
> —MANISH TIWARY | CMD, NESTLE INDIA

With the rise in input costs in the wake of the West Asia war and a forecast of a weak monsoon, how do you see margins and consumer demand this year? Have you taken any pricing action yet?

Commodity cycles are inherent to our business. Last year, coffee and cocoa prices were at irrational highs, which created margin pressure. This year, those have softened. However, milk prices are up around 6-7% year-on-year, wheat is showing some upward movement and packaging and logistics costs have increased. Palm kernel oil is also rising due to supply chain disruptions in southeast Asia.

That said, over the past five years, we have built resilience through multiple disruptions, including Covid. While volatility exists, we are balancing tailwinds and headwinds.

Pricing increases remain a last resort because ours is fundamentally a volume-driven business. So far, we haven't taken any significant price hikes or grammage reductions. There are early signs of demand moderation, as reflected in Nielsen data up to March. If fuel and food prices rise, it could weigh on consumption and squeeze the shopper's wallet. However, unless the situation becomes prolonged and severe, we believe we can manage through it.

How vulnerable is your portfolio to a potential discretionary slowdown?

While overall discretionary demand may be impacted, our exposure is relatively buffered. Many of our categories Maggi and KitKat have low 16-17% penetration. Consumers tend to cut back on frequently consumed items first, whereas our categories still have significant headroom. That said, some impact is inevitable.

Portfolios of RBI dy guvs to be distributed after Jain takes charge

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The appointment of Rohit Jain as deputy governor at the Reserve Bank of India comes after the retirement of T Rabi Sankar and at a time when the central bank has to prepare banks for new risks, including cybersecurity. Jain, who was appointed executive director in Dec 2020, was until now in charge of supervisory assessment of banks and financial institutions under the department of supervision. He was appointed deputy governor up to May 2029 after a vacancy arose after Sankar completed his term last week.

The deputy governor portfolios are likely to be announced this week after Jain takes charge. Sankar, who was deputy governor since 2021, oversaw a broad portfolio that included corporate strategy and budget, currency management, external investments and operations, information technology, payment and settlement systems, fintech, financial markets regulation, foreign exchange, and internal debt management.

Currently, Shirish Chandra Murmu is responsible for regulatory and enforcement functions, communication, and management of govt and bank accounts. Swaminathan J oversees supervisory, consumer protection, and inspection of financial entities, among others. Poonam Gupta handles macroeconomic, monetary, and external functions, covering economic research, statistics, monetary policy, financial markets operations, financial stability, and international relations.

Public speeches by officials below the rank of deputy governor are not routinely available, but Jain's address ahead of the G20 finance ministers' and central bank governors meeting in Bengaluru in 2023 was widely reported. In that speech, he had said that banks and financial institutions must adequately resource their security architecture and integrate safeguards into core processes.

"Security by design needs to be embedded as part of the banking processes, and security controls should be conceived and implemented," he had said.

A correction

An article on Rohit Jain's appointment as DG in the edition dated May 2, 2026 erroneously referred to former M Rajeshwar Rao as deputy governor in place of SC Murmu. The error is regretted.

New codes boost gratuity but trim take-home pay

Shilpa Phadnis & Veena Mani | TNN

Bengaluru: With many employees seeing a moderate dip in net take-home salaries in their latest payslips, companies are issuing explainers to help them understand the impact of the new labour codes.

The reduction is largely due to changes in salary composition. Employee provident fund (PF) contributions have increased, as they are now calculated as 12% of a higher basic salary component. At the same time, gratuity accruals have also risen because they are linked to this expanded wage base.

Vikram Shroff, partner, employment, labour and benefits at law firm AZB & Partners, said the labour codes mandate that at least 50% of total remuneration is treated as wages for statutory payments, regardless of the CTC (cost to company) breakup. This, he said, protects employees' interests. "In cases where basic salary was lower, some employers increased it to 50% to better align with the wages definition. As a result, some of the other components were reduced or revised, while provident fund contributions increased. These changes led to a reduction in net take home pay," he said.

Employees are beginning to see this play out in their compensation. IT professional Deepak C, who received a salary increment effective April, said the gratuity component in his pay has doubled. He received a Rs 90,000 annual increase in CTC, but "Rs 40,000 is going into the gratuity," up from Rs 20,000 earlier. "My hike is effectively Rs 50,000 which is split between the PF and other components," he said, highlighting the reduced immediate gain in take-home pay.

> **SAP India has extended the revised gratuity calculation retrospectively to cover employees' entire tenure**

In some cases, companies are going beyond statutory requirements to cushion the impact. German software firm SAP India, for instance, has extended the revised gratuity calculation retrospectively to cover employees' entire tenure, rather than only from the date of implementation. It has also allocated additional budget to provide a one-time, permanent uplift in total target compensation (TTC), absorbing the higher employer-side PF and gratuity costs within the overall CTC. Additionally, SAP has introduced an uncapped gratuity benefit, where payouts exceeding the statutory cap of Rs 20 lakh are calculated on basic salary, resulting in higher payouts.

SAP has described the "one-time uplift" as a compensatory increase to offset the reduction in monthly take-home pay due to the revised salary structure. As a larger portion of salaries is redirected toward PF and gratuity, the uplift is aimed at stabilising employees' net pay. An email sent to SAP didn't elicit a response till press time.

Puneet Gupta, partner at EY India, said that under the earlier regime, gratuity was calculated on basic salary plus dearness allowance. Under the new labour codes, however, gratuity is linked to the broader definition of "wages" under the Code on Social Security, 2020. "This shift is significant because the definition of wages expands inclusion of pay elements, subject to a 50% exclusion threshold. As a result, the base for gratuity calculation may increase," he said, adding that gratuity at exit will be based on last drawn wages.

(With inputs from Supriya Roy)

TIMES GLOBAL

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | MONDAY, MAY 4, 2026

SHAKIRA HOLDS FREE CONCERT ON RIO DE JANEIRO BEACH, DRAWS 2 MILLION FANS

IF YOU'RE ALIVE, THERE'S A PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE — RICK WARREN

'IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO LOVE': MERYL STREEP HEAPS PRAISE ON STANLEY TUCCI AS HE GETS HOLLYWOOD WALK OF FAME STAR

US responds to Iran's offer via Pak?

'No Nuclear Negotiations At This Stage'

Iran's latest proposal to the US called for issues between the countries to be resolved within 30 days and aimed to end the war rather than extend the ceasefire, according to Iran's state-linked media. President Donald Trump on Saturday said he was reviewing the proposal but expressed doubt it would lead to a deal, adding on social media that "they have not yet paid a big enough price for what they have done to Humanity, and the World, over the last 47 years".

On Sunday, Iran said it had received a US response to its offer for peace talks. Iranian state media reported that Washington had conveyed its response to Iran's 14-point proposal via Pakistan, and Tehran was now reviewing it. There was no immediate confirmation from Washington or Islamabad of the US response.

"At this stage, we do not have nuclear negotiations," state media quoted Iran's foreign ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei as saying, an apparent reference to Iran's proposal to set aside talks on nuclear issues until after the war ends and the parties agree to lift opposing blockades of Gulf shipping.

On Saturday, Trump said that he had yet to review the exact wording of the Iranian peace proposal, but that he was likely to reject it.

The US and Israel suspended their bombing campaign against Iran four weeks ago, and US and Iranian officials held one round of talks. But attempts to set up further meetings have failed so far.

Iran handed over its latest proposal on Thursday, and a senior Iranian official confirmed on Saturday that Tehran envisions ending the war and resolving the shipping standoff first, while leaving talks on Iran's nuclear programme for later.

Though Trump initially said on Friday that he was not satisfied with the proposal, he said on Saturday he was still looking at it. "They told me about the concept of the deal. They're going to give me the exact wording now," he told reporters. Asked if he might restart strikes on Iran, the US president replied: "I don't want to say that. I mean, I can't tell that to a reporter. If they misbehave, if they do something bad, right now we'll see. But it's a possibility that could happen."

The proposal to delay talks on nuclear issues until a later phase would appear at odds with Washington's repeated demand that Iran accept stringent restrictions on its nuclear programme before the war can end.

Washington wants Tehran to give up its stockpile of more than 400kg of highly enriched uranium, which the US says could be used to make a bomb. Iran says its nuclear programme is peaceful, though it is willing to discuss some curbs in return for the lifting of sanctions, as it had accepted in a 2015 deal that Trump abandoned.

Iranian media said the 14-point proposal includes withdrawing US forces from nearby areas, lifting the blockade, releasing frozen assets, paying compensation, lifting sanctions, ending the war on all fronts including Lebanon and creating a new control mechanism for Strait of Hormuz. AGENCIES

AFP

A symbolic classroom representing the Minab schoolchildren who were killed in the Feb 28 strike is displayed in a square in Tehran

US must choose impossible op or bad deal: Iran Guards

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said on Sunday that the US faced a choice between an "impossible" military operation or a "bad deal" in an online post carried by state television.

It added that the window for US decision-making had "been narrowed", citing what it described as a "shift in tone" from China, Russia and Europe towards Washington as well as what it called an Iranian "deadline" over the US naval blockade. AFP

Israel issues evacuation warning; kills 1, hurts 4 in Lebanon strikes

Beirut: Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon killed at least one person and wounded four rescuers on Sunday, the Lebanese health ministry said, as Israel maintained its attacks on the country despite a fragile truce in its war with Hezbollah.

In separate statements, the ministry said a strike on Arabsalim killed at least one person and wounded three, including a child, and another strike on Srifa wounded five people, including four rescuers from the Hezbollah-affiliated Islamic Health Committee.

"The ministry reiterates its condemnation of these repeated attacks and recalls what is included in Article 19 of the Geneva Convention regarding the need to verify that medical facilities are safe from any danger caused by attacks in conflict zones, while what is happening is exactly the opposite," it said.

Israel's military on Sunday issued new evacuation warnings in southern Lebanon for villages beyond the area it occupies. The warning covers more than 10 villages and towns, including several in the district of Nabatieh, which lies north of the Litani River, south of which Israel has stationed troops.

Arabsalim and Srifa were included in the warning.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported a series of Israeli strikes across southern Lebanon, including on towns not mentioned in the evacuation warning.

Since April 17, a fragile ceasefire has been in place between Israel and Lebanon, which was aimed at pausing the violence between the Hezbollah militant group and Israel's military.

On Wednesday Israel's military chief of staff Eyal Zamir had threatened to strike Hezbollah "beyond the yellow line", which marks the area of Israeli control. "Any threat, anywhere, against our communities or our forces — including beyond the yellow line and north of the Litani — will be eliminated," he said during a visit to Israeli troops.

The ceasefire text grants Israel the right to act against "planned, imminent or ongoing attacks". AFP

REUTERS

Smoke rises in Lebanon following an explosion on Sunday

Israel raid in West Bank leaves 1 Palestinian dead

A Palestinian man was killed and four people were seriously wounded during an Israeli military raid in the West Bank city of Nablus on Sunday, the Palestinian Red Crescent said. The Palestinian health ministry said the man's wife was in labour at a local hospital when she was informed of his death.

The raid took place as schools were letting out for the day, in an area crowded with civilians, witnesses said. AP

Hezbollah weapons 'meant for terror' seized

Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) said on Sunday that it recovered several weapons belonging to Hezbollah that were intended for terror activities against IDF soldiers. IDF also posted photographs on X and noted that the weapons found included machine guns, Kalashnikov rifles and anti-tank missiles. "Additionally, 2 armed terrorists were eliminated south of the Forward Defense Line, after posing an immediate threat to IDF soldiers in the area," it said. ANI

Bulk carrier near Hormuz reports attack, crew safe

Dubai: A bulk carrier near Strait of Hormuz has reported being attacked by multiple small craft, the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations Centre said on Sunday, marking at least two dozen attacks in and around the strait since the Iran war began. All crew on the unidentified northbound carrier were safe after the attack off Sirik in Iran, east of the strait, the monitor said.

Iranian officials have asserted that ships not affiliated with the US or Israel can pass if they pay a toll.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, the first reported in the area since April 22, when a cargo ship reported being fired upon, the monitor said. The threat level in the area remains critical. Tehran effectively closed the strait by attacking and threatening ships.

The fragile three-week ceasefire appears to be holding, though US President Donald Trump on Saturday told journalists that further strikes remained a possibility. AP

Open strait now, German foreign min tells Iran

Berlin: German foreign minister **Johann Wadephul** on Sunday demanded that Iran reopen Strait of Hormuz and give up its nuclear weapons programme in a phone call with Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi. "I emphasised that Germany supports a negotiated solution," Wadephul said on X.

"As a close US ally, we share the same goal: Iran must completely... renounce nuclear weapons and immediately open Strait of Hormuz, as also demanded" by US secretary of state Marco Rubio, he said.

Wadephul and other officials have been trying to ease a spat between US President Trump and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, who has been critical of the war. AFP

UAE lifts curbs on airspace, more flights on Gulf routes

New Delhi: The UAE General Civil Aviation Authority has announced the full resumption of normal air navigation operations within UAE airspace and the lifting of temporary precautionary measures, and consequently, Indian and UAE carriers have started operating more flights from the UAE to various destinations in India, the ministry of external affairs stated on Sunday.

The overall flight situation in West Asia continues to improve with additional flights operating from the region to various destinations in India.

Flights continue to operate from airports across Saudi Arabia and Oman to destinations in India. Qatar's airspace is partially open. Air India, Air India Express, IndiGo and Qatar Airways are operating flights from Qatar to India.

Kuwait airspace is open. Jazeera Airways and Kuwait Airways are operating flights from Kuwait to India.

Similarly, with the Bahrain airspace open, Air India Express, IndiGo and Gulf Air are operating flights from there to India. IANS

OPEC+ hikes oil output quota, mum on UAE pull-out

Vienna: Saudi Arabia, Russia and five other OPEC+ countries increased their oil production quota on Sunday in an expected move aimed at demonstrating continuity at the cartel after the shock withdrawal of the UAE.

The seven major producers will add 188,000 barrels per day to their total production quota for June amid the price pressure unleashed by the war, as part of "their collective commitment to support oil market stability", according to a statement published by OPEC+.

The statement, following an online meeting of Algeria, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Oman, Russia and Saudi Arabia, made no mention of the UAE, which quit the body on Friday, three days after announcing its withdrawal.

Rystad Energy analyst Jorge Leon said the silence on the UAE's departure was a sign of tense relations.

Oil market analysts had widely expected the increase of 188,000 barrels, similar to the 206,000-barrel daily increases OPEC+ announced in both March and April when the portion allotted to the UAE was subtracted. "By sticking to the same production path — just minus the UAE — it's acting as if nothing has happened, deliberately downplaying internal fractures and projecting stability," Leon said.

The seven major producers will add 188,000 barrels per day for June amid the price pressure unleashed by the West Asia conflict

But raising the quota on paper may not have much impact on actual production, which is already short of the limit. Untapped OPEC+ reserves are mainly located in Gulf region, and exports there are trapped by the blockade of the vital Strait of Hormuz, imposed by Iran in response to the US-Israeli strikes that started the war on Feb 28. AFP

Ukraine hits Russian oil sites as 5 killed in both countries

Kyiv: Ukraine said Sunday it had hit several Russian ships — a cruise missile carrier and three shadow fleet tankers — as both sides fired hundreds of drones in a spree that killed at least five people.

Three were killed in Ukraine, one in Russia and one in Russian-occupied southern Ukraine, according to statements by local officials. The two neighbours have been firing hundreds of explosive-packed drones at each other on a daily basis throughout the four-year war, as talks to end the conflict have gone nowhere.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Sunday vowed to step up Kyiv's retaliatory strikes on Russian energy sites if Moscow did not halt its invasion.

"Russia can end its war at any moment. Prolonging the war will only expand the scale of our defensive operations," he said on social media.

The Ukrainian leader said his troops had struck a vessel equipped with cruise missiles at the port of Primorsk, in Russia's northwestern Leningrad region. The region's oil export terminals have been hit several times in recent weeks, knocking out billions of dollars' worth of exports, according to Kyiv.

President Zelensky said three of Russia's so-called shadow tankers — ageing vessels that ferry its sanctioned oil around the world — were struck, one at Primorsk and two off the southern Black Sea port of Novorossiysk.

He posted black-and-white night-vision footage of a naval drone approaching one tanker at Novorossiysk.

Oil and gas revenues — boosted by the ongoing war in the West Asia — are critical for Russia's economy and funding its army. AFP

Nepal cancels 1,500 'political' postings by former govts

Kathmandu: Nepal's new govt has effectively cancelled over 1,500 major public appointments through a sweeping ordinance issued by President Ramchandra Paudel, local media reported. These appointments were made before March 26 — the date marking a govt change in the country.

The Balendra Shah-led Rastriya Swatantra Party swept to office riding on the massive opposition to the legacy parties in the country in the March 5 elections, months after the Sept 2025 Gen Z protests.

President Paudel on Saturday issued the 'Ordinance on Special Provisions for the Removal of Public Office Bearers, 2083' on the recommendation of the council of ministers, triggering widespread disruptions across Nepal's administrative, health and education sectors, according to The Kathmandu Post daily.

The move aims to target politically motivated appointments made by previous govts, including the

The decision by the Balendra Shah-led govt has drawn flak from some who warn it could disrupt functioning of public bodies

Sushila Karki-led interim govt formed after the Gen Z movement, according to the reports. It is not uncommon in Nepal for incoming govts to review decisions made by their predecessors, especially appointments to influential public posts. However, the scale of the current move appears wider than usual.

The move has drawn flak from some who warn it could disrupt the functioning of public bodies, while officials say it was needed to improve transparency and accountability. The ordinance led to the dismissal of 1,594 "politically appointed" office-bearers across sectors, myRepublica reported. The provision mandates that all appointments made prior to March 26 are automatically terminated. PTI

2 US servicemen missing in Morocco during def exercise

Rabat: Two US service members taking part in an exercise in southern Morocco have gone missing, military authorities from both countries said on Sunday, adding that a search was under way.

The 'African Lion 2026' military exercise began late last month in the southern Moroccan city of Agadir, bringing together nearly 5,000 military personnel from more than 40 countries until May 8.

"Two US service members taking part in African Lion 2026 went missing" on Saturday evening "near a cliff at Cap Draa in the Tan Tan area", Morocco's armed forces said on Facebook. "The Moroccan, American and other participating forces in the exercise... immediately launched coordinated search and rescue operations involving ground, air and maritime assets," they added.

US Africa Command also announced that the service members were missing, saying: "The incident remains under investigation and the search is ongoing." AFP

US goes ahead with radar upgrade for Pak's F-16 fleet, move a worry for India

Surendra.Singh@timesofindia.com

In a decision that will raise India's concerns, the US is progressing ahead with a radar upgrade programme for Pakistan's F16 fleet, which comprises between 75 to 85 fighter jets.

In a $488 million deal, American defence major Northrop Grumman Systems Corp has been contracted to provide engineering and technical support for F-16 radar systems under the United States Air Force's foreign military sales programme for Pakistan and other beneficiary countries.

The April 2026 contract between the two countries was announced amid heightened tensions in the region following India's Operation Sindoor, which saw missile strikes on Pakistan terror hubs and military assets, including its air bases.

The April contract for a radar facelift is the 2nd US plan for Pakistan's F-16 fleet upgrade after Dec's $686m package

The upcoming F16 upgrade programme also comes at a time when Pakistan has been hosting US and Iran delegations in its capital Islamabad for peace negotiations to end the West Asia conflict.

The radar upgrade work for the fighter aircraft is expected to be completed by March 31, 2036.

Pakistan's F16 upgrade plan will be noted with concern by India as IAF's aircraft squadron numbers have dipped to an alarming 29, as against the minimum sanctioned strength of 42 required to fight a two-front war with China and Pakistan.

The development comes months after a separate US notification in Dec 2025 when Defence Security Cooperation Agency had informed Congress of a proposed $686 million package to upgrade and support Pakistan's F-16 fleet.

Besides Pakistan, the April 2026 contract involves military sales to countries that include Bahrain, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Korea, Oman, Poland and Turkiye.

DAILY PLANET

Finland: Unidentified drone suspected of violating airspace

An unidentified drone was suspected of violating Finland's airspace in Virolahti near its border with Russia early on Sunday, the defence ministry said, adding that its model and origin had not been identified. The ministry said the drone was no longer in Finnish airspace. The incident was being investigated by the Finnish border guard, it said, providing no other information. Finland has a 1,340-km border with Russia.

2 women die on migrant boat seeking to reach UK

Two women appear to have suffocated to death on Sunday while trying to reach Britain from northern France in a small boat crammed with more than 80 people, including pregnant women and children, officials said. This was the third such tragedy in just over a month. The women, aged around 20, were aboard a small boat that set out to sea south of the town of Neufchatel-Hardelot, Christophe Marx, a local govt official, told reporters. Officials believe the two victims are of Sudanese origin. Separately, Utopia 56, a migrant aid association, described the two victims as being a 16-year-old and a 20-year-old woman.

Rubio to visit Vatican, Rome after Trump row

US secretary of state Marco Rubio will visit Rome and the Vatican this week, an Italian govt source said on Sunday, weeks after President Donald Trump's criticism of Pope Leo XIV for his anti-war rhetoric. Italian media reported that Rubio would meet the US pontiff himself on Thursday, but there was no immediate confirmation of this. Newspapers presented the visit by Rubio, a Catholic, as a meeting to "thaw" relations. The source said Rubio had asked for a meeting with Italian PM Giorgia Meloni, one of Trump's closest European allies, whom he turned on after she defended the pope.

Cops detain suspect in rat poison in baby food case

Police in eastern Austria say a 39-year-old suspect has been arrested after rat poison turned up in some HiPP baby food jars on supermarket shelves in central Europe. HiPP, which recalled some of its baby food jars in Austria, Slovakia and the Czech Republic after the case came to light last month, said in a statement on Saturday that it was "greatly relieved" by the arrest, and would provide further updates.

Crowdfunding helps Serbian birdwatchers save woodland

Plandiste (Serbia): The merry chirping of birds echoed through towering trees in a small woodland in northeastern Serbia. Down on the ground, animal tracks could be seen imprinted in the moist grass and moss.

The 2-hectare piece of land, dubbed Nightingale's Forest, is a rare patch of thick greenery in the flat, farming region of Serbia. The Balkan country's Bird Protection and Study Society bought the land last year through crowdfunding to preserve the forest and set an example in environmental protection.

"This woodland was privately owned, and we saw it was put up for sale," society representative Uros Stojiljkovic said, adding that the trees probably would have been cut down if someone else had bought the land.

"The value of timber was higher than the land price," Stojiljkovic said. "We protected it this way."

The success of the crowdfunding initiative is seen as a sign of growing interest in nature protection among people in Serbia as the country faces environmental problems from air and river pollution and waste management to profit-driven construction threatening green areas, particularly in big cities.

Authorities have pledged to boost environmental care as part of the country's European Union membership bid, but protection groups have warned little has been done in reality.

AP

Nightingale's Forest is a rare patch of thick greenery in the farming region

Nightingale's Forest is home to a variety of bird and animal species who thrive on its moist habitat, Stojiljkovic explained. The new owners now plan to list the plants and animals there while preserving the woodland as it is.

The purchase price of 8,000 euros ($9,500) was collected in less than a month and hundreds of people have continued to donate funds that will be used for field work or additional land purchases, said Natasa Jancic, who was involved in the campaign.

"Individually, we can't do much, but as an active and stable community, we can achieve a lot," Jancic said.

Launched some 30 years ago as a small, expert-only group, Bird Protection and Study Society has grown into a community of nature lovers, which is more proof of a mounting interest in the environment, Jancic said.

"We have many families who are members, many nature lovers who may not be that active in the field but they want to contribute somehow," Jancic added.

Just 2 hectares under protection won't change much on a larger scale, but it's a good first step, Stojiljkovic said.

"Every village or town should have a Nightingale's Forest of its own for a cumulative effect," he said, adding, "It is important to start somewhere." AP

TODAY'S FACE-OFF
MI vs LSG
TV TIME 7:30 PM
STAR SPORTS / JIOHOTSTAR

PLAYED 8

Won by MI 2 (25%)
Won by LSG 6 (75%)

LAST FIVE MATCHES
MI L L L W L
LSG L L L L L

VENUE: MUMBAI
ODDS
MI 7/10 | LSG 5/4

TIMES SPORT | THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU
MONDAY, MAY 4, 2026

IPL 2026

"IF SURYA GETS A FEW SCORES TOGETHER, I THINK HE WILL FIND THAT RHYTHM. I THINK SOMETIMES WHEN THINGS ARE NOT GOING YOUR WAY, IT DOESN'T FALL IN PLACE. HE IS STILL IN A GOOD SPACE. IT'S JUST THAT HE'S GOT CAUGHT ON THE BOUNDARY A NUMBER OF TIMES."
—Maheia Jayawardene | MI Coach

Reality check for Sunrisers

Hosts Waste Good Start And Limp To 165; KKR Record Third Straight Win

JAC.Gladson@timesofindia.com

Hyderabad: It was as if Sunrisers Hyderabad skipper Pat Cummins had a premonition of the seven-wicket defeat when he said, "it's very unlikely we're going to win every single game for the rest of the season," at the toss.

For, the toss was the only thing that went right for the hosts, as the Kolkata Knight Riders' spin twins Varun Chakravarthy (3/36) and Sunil Narine (2/31) did the rest on a very hot day when the players would have been excused if they wanted to be someplace else than the Rajiv Gandhi International stadium.

The raucous cheers of the Sunday crowd as the Sunrisers cruised to 71/1 in the powerplay — identical for both teams — was soon silenced as Chakravarthy, back in the side after being the impact player in the previous match, derailed the innings by dismissing Travis Head (61; 28b, 9x4, 3x6).

Chakravarthy, who conceded 29 in the first two overs, turned on the screws in his second spell of 2-0-7-2 as the Sunrisers lost eight wickets for 58 runs to collapse between overs 11 and 19 and be dismissed for 165. It was way below par — KKR replied with 169/3 — and bucked the trend of the last three matches between the teams since 2025, when the team batting first scored upwards of 200 and won by margins of 80, 110 and 65 runs.

The 61-run stand for the second wicket between Head and Ishan Kishan (42; 29b, 4x4, 2x6) was the sole bright spot for the Sunrisers and a reality check, if they needed after five consecutive wins, of a soft underbelly that their middle order is when Heinrich Klaasen fails to come good.

The South African mainstay of the SRH batting fell to a stunning one-handed catch by Rovman Powell, diving full length to his right at mid-wicket after Klaasen carted Cameron Green for 10 in the previous two deliveries, and with an indisposed Nitish Reddy missing, the back end of the innings lacked the drive that took them to 107/2 at the halfway stage.

The KKR batters complemented the excellent show of their bowlers on a strip tailormade for batting. Impact player Finn Allen, who replaced fellow New Zealander Tim Seifert in the XI, missed out after smashing Cummins for 27 runs in the fourth over but skipper Ajinkya Rahane's calm presence was all that Kolkata needed as they chased down the target in 18.2 overs for their third straight victory.

Though the skipper fell for 43 (36b, 4x4, 1x6) on threshold of victory, his 84-run (66b) partnership for the second wicket with Angkrish Raghuvanshi (59; 47b, 5x4, 2x6) ensured there were no more hiccups.

IANS

ANOTHER STRIKE: KKR players celebrate an SRH wicket on Sunday

SCOREBOARD

SRH: A Sharma c Green b Tyagi 15, T Head c Green b Chakaravarthy 61, I Kishan c Roy b Narine 42, H Klaasen c Powell b Green 11, S Ravichandran c Rahane b Chakaravarthy 4, A Verma c Rahane b Chakaravarthy 6, S Arora b Narine 2, P Cummins c and b Roy 10, S Kumar c Raghuvanshi b Arora 1, H Patel c Arora b Tyagi 6, E Malinga not out 2; **Extras: (b1, w4) 5; Total: (19 ovrs) 165; FoW:** 1-44, 2-105, 3-117, 4-122, 5-135, 6-139, 7-148, 8-156, 9-156, 10-165;

Bowling: Narine 4-0-31-2, Arora 3-0-25-1, Tyagi 4-0-30-2, Green 3-0-34-1, Chakaravarthy 4-0-36-3, Roy 1-0-8-1

KKR: A Rahane c Ravichandran b Hussain 43, F Allen c Klaasen b Cummins 29, A Raghuvanshi c Malinga b Shivang 59, R Singh not out 22, C Green not out 3; **Extras: (lb1, w12) 13; Total: (3 wkts, 18.2 ovrs) 169; FoW:** 1-49, 2-133, 3-151; **Bowling:** Abhishek 2-0-14-0, Cummins 4-0-47-1, Malinga 3.2-0-42-0, Shivang 4-0-31-1, Harshal 2-0-17-0, Hussain 3-0-17-1

Result: KKR won by 7 wickets

21 KKR's 7-wicket win is their 21st in 32 matches in the IPL, emulating their tally of 21 wins in 36 matches vs Punjab

3/36 Varun Chakravarthy's 2nd best bowling performance vs SRH is behind the 3/22 on Apr 3, 2025.

61 Travis Head's third fifty vs KKR is his second in a losing game. His other eight fifties were recorded in a winning cause.

201 KKR spinner Sunil Narine has become the first overseas bowler to complete 200 wickets when he dismissed Salil Arora. His tally now is 201 wickets at 25.53 in 197 games.
—**Stats:** Rajesh Kumar

RAHANE HAILS CONSISTENCY OF KKR BOWLING UNIT

Hyderabad: KKR skipper Ajinkya Rahane praised his bowling unit for its consistency over the last few games. "It looked like SRH will get 190-200. It would've been challenging to chase. But credit to our bowling unit, especially the spinners. They kept taking wickets," Rahane said. PTI

HOW THEY STAND

TEAM	M	W	L	NR	NRR	P
PBKS	9	6	2	1	0.855	13
RCB	9	6	3	0	1.420	12
SRH	10	6	4	0	0.644	12
RR	10	6	4	0	0.510	12
GT	10	6	4	0	-0.147	12
CSK	9	4	5	0	0.005	8
DC	9	4	5	0	-0.895	8
KKR	9	3	5	1	-0.539	7
MI	9	2	7	0	-0.803	4
LSG	8	2	6	0	-1.106	4

Pacers, Washington ensure Gujarat win

Sabu.Cherian@timesofindia.com

Ahmedabad: Gujarat Titans endured a few nervy moments but did just enough to notch up their third win on the bounce at the Narendra Modi Stadium here on Sunday.

Chasing 164 and looking relatively comfortable following Sai Sudharsan's (57), GT suddenly hit a roadblock in the 19th over. Arshdeep Singh bowled a brilliant 19th over taking Jason Holder's wicket and conceding only six.

Gujarat needed 12 in the last over, but Arshad Khan got a crucial boundary in the first ball of the 20th before Washington Sundar finished it off with a six off the fifth ball bowled by Marcus Stoinis. Washington (40* off 23 balls) proved to be the finisher that GT have lacked in recent times, even though the team management will hope that he comes up with a few more of the big hits as they push for a top-four berth.

The win, though, was larely set up by the GT pacers Mohammed Siraj (2-28), Kagiso Rabada (2-22) and Jason Holder (4-24). The Titans' new-ball bowlers delivered a bowling masterclass, the ideal good-length balls that batters hate facing.

They reduced PBKS, the team with the highest Powerplay score this season, to 35/3 by the end of six overs. Only a promising half-century by Suryansh Shedge (57 off 29b; 3x4, 5x6) and his 79-run partnership with Stoinis (41 off 30b; 3x4, 1x6) took PBKS, invited to bat first, to 163/9.

GT's Test-match specialists Siraj and Rabada didn't deliver the fuller-length, driveable balls, but resorted to good-length deliveries. And with a little bit of help from the surface, they kept beating the outside edge of the batters.

Siraj had opener Priyansh Arya caught. Arya's cut shot off a bouncing delivery was held at third man by GT debutant Nishant Sindhu, who replaced M Shahrukh Khan. Next ball, Australian southpaw Cooper Connolly feathered an inside edge to a good-length ball. Prabhsimran Singh (15) tried to resurrect the innings in company of his captain Shreyas Iyer.

But an attempted forceful shot off Rabada saw him getting caught at cover. Out-of-form Nehal Wadhera edged to Buttler off Holder before the West Indian had Iyer chopping on to his stumps off a ball that jagged in after pitching.

BRIEF SCORES: GT 167/9 in 19.5 overs (Sai Sudharsan 57, Washington Sundar 40*; Arshdeep Singh 2/24, Vijaykumar Vyshak 2/31) beat **PBKS 162/9** (Suryansh Shedge 57; Jason Holder 4/24, Kagiso Rabada 2/22, Mohammed Siraj 2/28)

Yogesh Chawda

Jason Holders after taking a Punjab Kings wicket on Sunday

Will MI allow Bumrah the rest he badly needs?

Jayawardene Bullish About Allowing Pacer A Break Despite Team Being All But Out Of Play-Off Race

Dwaipayan.Datta@timesofindia.com

Chennai: On Saturday evening, Mumbai Indians once again left it on Jasprit Bumrah to try and achieve the near impossible— defend 160 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium against the Chennai Super Kings.

Bumrah bowled his heart out, dismissed the red-hot Sanju Samson, and took 1-20 in three overs. But CSK played him out, attacked from the other end, and won easily.

That has been the case right through this IPL — in nine games, Bumrah has already bowled 33 overs going at a rate of 8.61, when the others have bled runs far more profusely. MI want Bumrah to do the defensive and attacking duties at the same time, and the jaded paceman, who has been playing continuous cricket since the beginning of the T20 World Cup, is struggling to deliver the wickets.

Predictably enough, he is copping some of the blame for the dismal MI performance, who are all but out of contention for a play-off berth. And that brings us to the important question: "Will MI rest him now for the rest of the tournament?"

MI coach Mahela Jayawardene didn't seem to buy the idea at the press meet after the Saturday mauling. "We are not yet out, are we?" Mahela turned to the accompanying media manager, who vigorously nodded to let the coach know that there's still life left in the campaign.

"It's too early for me to say anything, we still have five more games, anything can happen for us. We just need to finish the tournament positively and see what happens. There's a lot more cricket to be played, I don't think mathematically we're out from the tournament, so I'm going to fight and I'm sure the rest of the boys will do the same as well," Jayawardene was bullish about resting Bumrah for the rest of the tournament.

JASPRIT BUMRAH

Maybe someone should remind the Sri Lankan legend about 2022, when MI were enduring a campaign as wretched as this one. They won only four games and finished last, but Bumrah was made to play all the 14 games. He bowled 53.2 overs in the entire tournament out of his available 56, took 15 wickets and had an economy rate of 7.15.

Brilliant figures no doubt, but what happened after that spelt nightmare not just for Bumrah, but also the Indian team. Bowling flat out in meaningless games, Bumrah suffered a back stress fracture, was out of action for 11 months and India lost the T20 World Cup semifinal to England by 10 wickets without their spearhead.

Bumrah had a recurrence of the back injury in 2025 and since his return, the 32-year-old gives a lot of importance on workload management. That led to India's all-format master dropping out of two crucial Test matches against England last year when the series was on the line.

That didn't go down too well with everyone who runs Indian cricket these days and there are already talks that the management wants him to play all the nine World Test Championship matches that India have in the rest of the cycle. The ODI World Cup is also in 2027 October in South Africa and Bumrah, who hasn't played a single 50-over game since the 2023 World Cup final, needs to have some game-time in the format.

That is a lot of cricket this cycle and Bumrah needs to be adequately rested to deliver on all formats, with his body not breaking down. For all practical purposes, the champion should be resting from Monday when MI play LSG till the end of IPL, but is Mumbai Indians listening?

JASPRIT BUMRAH SINCE JAN 2026

	M	Ovrs	Md	Runs	Wkts	Ave	Best	4WI	SR	ER
T20Is	12	43.0	0	316	18	17.55	4/15	1	14.3	7.34
In IPL	9	33.0	0	284	3	94.66	1/15	0	66.0	8.60
Overall	21	76.0	0	600	21	28.57	4/15	1	21.7	7.89

How Kamboj is thriving at the death

Neha.Surana@timesofindia.com

Chennai: Chennai Super Kings are having a middling season, but medium-pacer Anshul Kamboj seems to be their breakout star. With 17 scalps in nine matches at an economy rate of 7.54, including 3-32 against Mumbai Indians on Saturday, Kamboj has been the leader of the CSK attack, both in powerplay and slog overs. With the wickets of Robin Minz and Hardik Pandya in the 18th and 20th overs at Chepauk on Saturday, Kamboj became the first bowler this season to claim 10 wickets in the death overs.

The right-arm seamer has been treating the death overs like a closing act he had rehearsed to perfection. He has been extensively going around the stumps, especially to right-hand batters, switching his lengths according to the phase of play and has landed the yorkers regularly.

CSK head coach Stephen Fleming doesn't think Kamboj's heroics have come as a surprise. "Last year, he was really good. He's worked hard with Eric Simons (bowling coach) around the concept of death bowling and he has worked during the year to master that," said Fleming.

ANSHUL KAMBOJ

Last IPL season, Kamboj picked up eight wickets in eight games at an economy of 8.00. Shortly after, he stepped onto the biggest stage, earning his India Test debut, but his returns against England weren't strong enough to secure him a long run.

This season, though, he has returned with more bite and moved into a central role in CSK's pace attack after Khaleel Ahmed's injury.

Fleming said Kamboj worked on angles and execution in pre-season. "During pre-season, he bowled with open wickets and we got an understanding of the angles — what he can and can't do from certain sides of the wicket and it has worked out well," he added.

India have quite a bit of cricket going ahead after IPL across formats and Kamboj's stellar show could soon push him back into the national fast-bowling setup. But for Kamboj, team performance outweighs personal milestones. Ahead of the clash against MI, he had said: "My complete focus is on how to contribute to the team's win."

CSK go into must-win mode from Tuesday and the team will hope Kamboj keeps walking the talk.

MI, LSG fight to stay off the bottom

Gaurav.Gupta@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: Enduring a nightmare season, five-time champions Mumbai Indians will hope their superstars — Jasprit Bumrah, skipper Hardik Pandya and Suryakumar Yadav — finally rediscover form when they face bottom-placed Lucknow Super Giants in what is shaping up as a 'wooden spoon' battle at the Wankhede Stadium on Sunday night.

The danger for ninth-placed MI, who have lost seven of their nine matches, is that another defeat could push them to the bottom of the table, swapping places with LSG.

WEATHER 31°C

Bumrah (three wickets in nine matches at 94.66, economy 8.60), Pandya (146 runs in eight matches at 20.85, four wickets at 61.50, economy 11.90) and Suryakumar (183 runs in nine matches at 20.33) have endured a forgettable IPL 2026, severely hampering MI's campaign — more so in the absence of former skipper Rohit Sharma, who has missed the last five games with a hamstring injury. Rohit attended MI's optional practice session on Sunday alongside head coach Mahela Jayawardene, but there remains no clarity on his return.

With playoff hopes all but over, MI will look to their Indian core to salvage some pride.

KSCA shifts to transparent hiring of coaches & selectors, invites applications

Manuja.Veerappa@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: After nearly two decades, the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) has decided to invite applications for a range of cricketing roles, including coaches and selectors.

Until now, the association has largely relied on internal screening of interested candidates. However, the Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC), at a meeting on Saturday, resolved to adopt an open application process.

CRICKET

The cricket committee comprises former international cricketers Anil Kumble, Javagal Srinath, Rahul Dravid and Sunil Joshi, along with their former teammates KSCA president Venkatesh Prasad and vice-president Sujith Somasundar.

Applications have been invited for key roles such as selectors, coaches, performance analysts, masseurs and sidearm specialists across age-group and senior teams for both men and women. Positions are also open at the KSCA high-performance academy.

"It's about transparency, integrity, honesty and value-driven processes put in place by the CAC, which comprises some of the best cricketers," Somasundar told TOI.

Explaining the rationale behind the decision, he added, "When you open it up for people to apply, you have a wider choice. People who are good and not on our radar might apply as well. It's fair that we open it up so that we cover everybody in the cricketing fraternity to apply and be heard."

For coaching roles, the minimum eligibility criterion is a BCCI Level 1 certification, with an upper age limit of 60.

Selectors for various age groups and senior teams must have represented Karnataka in the Ranji Trophy, while women selectors should have played for the state senior women's team. Applicants should not hold any conflicting roles under the BCCI or its affiliated bodies. While applications are open to candidates from across the country, Somasundar said the association would prefer suitable candidates from within Karnataka.

"We prefer somebody from the state because it aligns with our vision of creating opportunities not just for players but also for other stakeholders. Coaches and support staff from within the state understand the culture and background better," he said.

"In high-performance roles, relationships are key. Building rapport with players is easier when there is cultural and linguistic familiarity. We also believe we have a lot of capable coaches within the system," he stated.

Somasundar was quick to add, "While we are looking for candidates from Karnataka, we are not limiting it." The KSCA issued a notification on its website on Sunday, with May 11 set as the deadline for applications. Somasundar said the association was hopeful to complete the interview and hiring process by the end of the month.

Badale to join new board

▸Continued From Page 1

The acquisition includes the entire Royals global portfolio which features the Paarl Royals in South Africa and the Barbados Royals in the Caribbean. To ensure a smooth transition, Badale will join the new board alongside Lakshmi Mittal, Aditya Mittal, Vanisha Mittal-Bhatia and Poonawalla.

The $1.65 billion deal follows a previous attempt to sell the franchise that fell through earlier this year. In March, a consortium led by Kal Somani was the frontrunner with a $1.63 billion offer.

NEW OWNERS

That group included American billionaire Rob Walton (Walmart) and the Hamp family, owners of the NFL's Detroit Lions and major shareholders in Ford Motor Company.

However, the Somani-led effort stalled after the group was unable to raise the necessary capital. Regulatory uncertainties and complexities within the consortium's structure ultimately paved the way for the Mittal family to step in with a higher, successful bid, linking one of the world's most prominent industrial families directly back to the franchise's home region.

"I first played cricket as a schoolboy, and since then I have been an avid fan of the sport. Many great players have worn the Rajasthan Royals shirts, including Indian icons of the sport who have been an inspiration for the younger talent. I look forward to being part of this great team, and cannot wait to join all the fans on the pitch-side to cheer on our future success," said Lakshmi Mittal in a press release shared by the Jaipur-based franchise.

The franchise is currently held by Badale's Emerging Media Ventures (65%), with RedBird Capital Partners (15%) and Fox Corporation's Lachlan Murdoch among the minority investors.

Before the transition is finalised, the deal must pass several regulatory checks. Approval is required from the BCCI, the Competition Commission of India (CCI), and the IPL Governing Council. The parties anticipate the formal handover to be completed by Q3 2026.

Baranica clears 4.23m to better own pole vault NR

Arnab.Seal@timesofindia.com

Kolkata: Tamil Nadu's Baranica Elangovan bettered her own pole vault national record by clearing 4.23m on the second day of the inaugural Indian Indoor Open Combined Events and Pole Vault Competition at Bhubaneswar's Indoor Athletics Centre on Sunday. Baranica had set the previous national mark of 4.22m in March this year during the maiden National Indoor Athletics Meet.

NR in 4x100m mixed relay: Even though none of the Indian relay teams impressed on the second day of World Athletics Relays in Gaborone, Botswana, the 4x100m mixed relay team broke the national record by clocking 41.35s. After dropping the baton in their Round I race on Saturday, the quartet of Ragul Kumar, Nithya Gandhe, Animesh Kujur and Sneha SS made amends in Round II on Sunday, finishing sixth. However, they missed out on qualification for the 2027 World Championships in Beijing, with only the top two teams securing direct berths. It was disappointment for both the men's and women's 4x100m teams, who dropped the baton in their respective races.

SNAP SHOTS

SL to tour West Indies

Sri Lanka will tour the West Indies for the first time in five years for two Tests, three ODIs and three T20 matches, the cricket board said on Sunday. It will start with an ODI on June 3, followed by matches on June 6 and 8, at Sabina Park at Kingston, Jamaica. The first Test will be from June 25, while the second will start on July 3, with both matches in Antigua.

Diksha in contention: Diksha Dagar played a solid bogey-free 3-under 69 to move into title contention at the MCB Ladies Classic - Mauritius on the Ladies European Tour in Port Louis (Mauritius). Diksha is tied-fourth and just two behind the co-leaders, Denmark's Smilla Tarning Soenderby, Germany's Celina Sattelkau and South Africa's Casandra Alexander. They were all at a total of nine-under-par. Joining Diksha were Hitaashee Bakshi (71-69) and Tvesa Malik (70-71). Hitaashee was T-19 and Tvesa was T-26.

Sandhu, Sharma slip: India's Yuvraj Sandhu, who had a top-10 finish within his grasp even as he approached the back nine of the 2026 Turkish Airlines Open, endured a nightmarish final round to finish T43 in Belek, Turkey. Sandhu carded 5-over 77 and a total of even par for four days. He dropped to T-43, slipping 34 places. Shubhankar Sharma (74) was T-65 with rounds of 70-75-74-74 for 2-over total.

Ferguson taken to hospital: Former Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson has been taken to hospital after feeling unwell ahead of Sunday's Premier League match between United and Liverpool, media reported. The 84-year-old had been at Old Trafford for the match between the two rivals. Sky Sports reported that Ferguson was —conscious and had precautionary checks before being whisked away.

Antonelli takes pole

Miami: Formula One championship leader Kimi Antonelli sped to his third successive pole position on Saturday with Red Bull's Max Verstappen joining the Mercedes youngster on the front row for what could be a wet and stormy Miami Grand Prix. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc qualified third fastest on a hot and steamy afternoon, with McLaren's reigning world champion Lando Norris, winner of the earlier sprint, set to line up fourth. "It's been an amazing day to be on pole again," he said. REUTERS

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Mainoo's winner lifts United

Secure Champions League Return After Win Over Liverpool

Manchester: Manchester United's Kobbie Mainoo struck late to seal a dramatic 3-2 Premier League victory over rivals Liverpool on Sunday as the home side secured their return to the Champions League next season after a two-year absence.

Dominik Szoboszlai and Cody Gakpo had hauled Liverpool level in the second half after costly United errors, but Mainoo had the final say with a strike from the edge of the 18-yard box in the 77th minute to send Old Trafford into raptures.

FOOTBALL

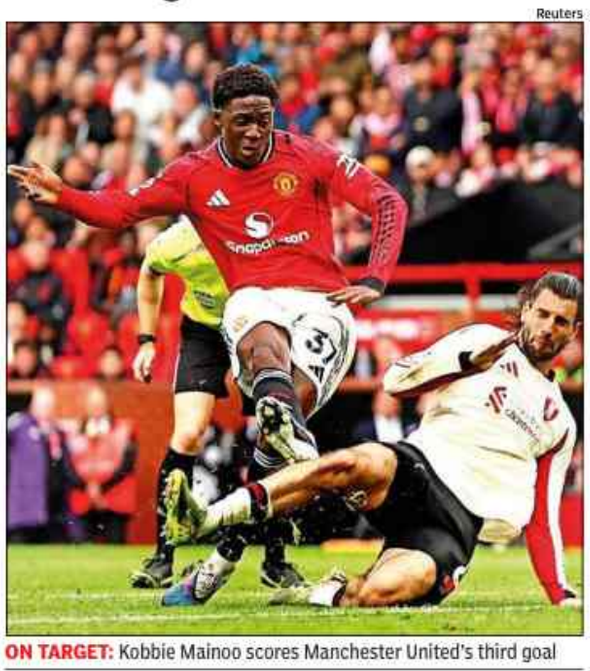
The win moved third-placed United onto 64 points with three games remaining, while fourth-placed Liverpool still have work to do to clinch a place among Europe's elite next season and are level on 58 points with fifth-placed Aston Villa, who host Tottenham Hotspur late on Sunday.

United got off to a great start, with Matheus Cunha scoring in the sixth minute and Benjamin Sesko doubling their lead eight minutes later. Cunha's goal came after a clearance fell at his feet, and the Brazilian scored with a hard low shot that glanced off Alexis Mac Allister. Sesko scored after Liverpool's stand-in goalkeeper Freddie Woodman pushed Bruno Fernandes' header off Sesko's body. The goal was awarded after VAR determined the ball did not come off Sesko's hand.

The two goals inside 14 minutes marked the earliest Liverpool had gone 2-0 down in a Premier League game since February 2023 against Wolverhampton Wanderers. Szoboszlai pulled one back in the 47th minute after Amad Diallo gave the ball away on the halfway line. Szoboszlai ran unchallenged, sprinting past Harry Maguire before slotting the ball home through defender Diogo Dalot's legs.

Gakpo levelled nine minutes later when Senne Lammens passed the ball straight to Mac Allister, and Gakpo slotted into the open net, setting up a nervy ending punctuated by Mainoo's heroics.

Reuters



ON TARGET: Kobbie Mainoo scores Manchester United's third goal

ARSENAL CRUISE

Arsenal opened up a six-point lead at the top of the Premier League on Saturday with a 3-0 win at home to Fulham, thanks to a first-half double from Viktor Gyokeres either side of a goal from Bukayo Saka. Arsenal played within themselves in a sedate second half having wrapped up a win that puts them on 76 points from 35 games, with second-placed Manchester City on 70 points from 33 games.

BARCA CLOSE IN ON TITLE

Barcelona moved to the brink of retaining the LaLiga title after Robert Lewandowski and Ferran Torres struck late in a 2-1 victory at Osasuna on Saturday.

Select results: EPL: Manchester United 3 (Cunha 6, Sesko 14, Mainoo 77) bt Liverpool 2 (Szoboszlai 47, Gakpo 56). **Saturday:** Arsenal 3 (Gyokeres 9, 45+4, Saka 40) bt Fulham 0. **Spanish league:** Celta Vigo 3 (Alvarez 14, Aspas 30, Iglesias 85) bt Elche 1 (Silva 82-pen); Getafe 0 lost to Rayo Vallecano 2 (Camello 38, Nteka 73). **Saturday:** Osasuna 1 (Garcia 88) lost to Barcelona 2 (Lewandowski 81, Torres 86). **German league:** Borussia Moenchengladbach 1 (Tabakovic 88) bt Borussia Dortmund 0. AGENCIES

Ayaan is youngest state champ

Ashim.Sunam@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Ayaan Phutane presented himself with the best possible gift on the eve of his 10th birthday. A student of Khannur Vidyanikethan School in Ranebennur created history by clinching the Karnataka state chess championship here on Sunday. He became the youngest player to win the state title.

The youngster from Bengaluru, who took to the sport as a six-year-old, was consistent throughout the tournament, finishing with 8 points out of 9. He remained unbeaten across all rounds, securing sev-

CHESS

en wins and two draws. At the end, Ayaan, Krishna, Sudharshan Bhat, and Siddhanth Poonja finished on eight points, but Ayaan secured the title based on a superior tie-break score.

Ayaan enjoyed his title win at the gaming zone for an hour. "I am pleased with this title; this is the biggest win of my career. I hope to become world number one in the future," the Maharashtra-born, who moved to the city in 2017, told TOI.

No wonder Ayaan, who idolises chess legend Bobby Fischer and India star Gukesh, has bigger dreams. He is no stranger to success. The youngster won gold in the Commonwealth Youth Chess Championship in the U-8 blitz and classical format in Sri Lanka in 2024. The fifth-grade student also won the World Cadet Open Blitz Chess Championship in Italy the same year. He has claimed podium finishes in various age categories since 2023, including gold in the U-7 and U-9 state meets.

Following his wins, Ashwini, his mother, left her software engineering job last year to travel with her son for tournaments. "I sacrificed my career to motivate him and keep him focused. Such a title, like today's, is an award for me as well. I cannot explain in words what this win means to us (family)," she said.

GOLDEN CHAPTER: Ayaan Phutane

DHAMNE FALLS IN FINAL

India's Manas Dhamne fell to Belgium's Buvaysar Gadamauri, ranked 357, in the final of the ATP Challenger 50 event in Shymkent, Kazakhstan on Sunday. The 18-year-old Indian went down 6-7 (6), 4-6 in just under two-hours. Dhamne went up 4-1 in the tie-break but won just two of the next nine points of the opening set. "I feel the match was quite good, I had some chances," Dhamne said in a post-match interaction. "But it is what it is, tennis works like this. There were a lot of learnings for me from today's match and I hope to fix them in the next tournaments."

Dhamne, who trains with Riccardo Piatti in Italy, was ranked 444 at the start of the tournament, is up to 382 in the Live Rankings at the end of his best week yet in tournament play. He is a little over 100 places behind the India No.1 Sumit Nagal (277). With this performance, Dhamne is up No.12 in the Next Gen Race for which the top-eight qualify for the finals at the end of the season. TNN

Prokofiev triumphs

Bengaluru: The hot favourite Prokofiev — piloted by Neeraj Rawal — came up trumps in the Ranquelin Cup, the main event on the second day's summer race here on Sunday.

1. Royal Command Plate (Div II) 1400M: Blue Storm 1, Lg's Script 2, Versace 3, Ransomware 4, Not Run: Shock And Awe 5l, 3l, 6-3/4l. T: 1.27.74. Tote: Rs 10 (W). 10, 13 ,10 (P). Fc: Rs 46. Q: Rs 38. Shp: Rs 35. Thp: Rs 28. Tmalla: Rs 111 & 21. Exacta: 303 & 255.

2. Belmont Park Plate (Div II) 1200M: Mnemosyne 1, Night Raider 2, Mutual Trust 3, Tiger Bay 4, Not Run: Allegro Dance 1-1/2l, Shd, Ns. T: 1.14.51 Tote: Rs 23 (W). 11, 10 ,12 (P). Fc: Rs 71. Q: Rs 41. Shp: Rs 28. Thp: Rs 39. Tmalla: Rs 89 & 34. Exacta: 219 & 116.

3. Royal Command Plate (Div I) 1400M: Fils De France 1, Steffen 2, Supreme Success 3, Breeze Bluster 4, 3l, 2-1/4l, 3-1/2l. T: 1.28.51 Tote: Rs 17 (W). 10, 29 ,13 (P). Fc: Rs 293. Q: Rs 163. Shp: Rs 88. Thp: Rs 38. Tmalla: Rs 675 & 152. Exacta: 7033 & 7033.

4. Belmont Park Plate (Div I) 1200M: Jade Mountain 1, Splendid Dream 2, Sapporo 3, Inicio 4, Not Run: Lockheed 3-1/4l, 2-1/2l, 3/4l. T: 1.13.17 Tote: Rs 20 (W). 14, 12 ,12 (P). Fc: Rs 54. Q: Rs 24. Shp: Rs 26. Thp: Rs 38. Tmalla: Rs 111 & 65. Exacta: 1551 & 1076.

5. Ranquelino Cup 1400M: Prokofiev 1, Rieko 2, Crosswater 3, Inspire 4, 3-1/4l, 1-1/4, 1. T: 1.25.60 Tote: Rs 14 (W). 10, 12 ,33 (P). Fc: Rs 30. Q: Rs 21. Shp: Rs 25. Thp: Rs 83. Tmalla: Rs 416 & 254. Exacta: 507 & 122.

6. Welcome Plate 1200M: Bulletproof 1, Osaka 2, Monstera 3, Bellucci 4, 4-1/4l, 1-3/4, 3/4l. T: 1.14.42 Tote: Rs 16 (W). 10, 16 ,41 (P). Fc: Rs 47. Q: Rs 33. Shp: Rs 43. Thp: Rs 109. Tmalla: Rs 774 & 531. Exacta: 15,591 & 6,682.

7. Squanderer Plate 1200M: Money bags 1, Pole Star 2, Defence Counsel 3, See The Light 4, 7-1/2l, 2-1/2l, 1-1/4l. T: 1.12.56 Tote: Rs 16 (W). 11, 17 ,74 (P). Fc: Rs 72. Q: Rs 65. Shp: Rs 48. Thp: Rs 211. Tmalla: Rs 3284 & 2033. Exacta: 6340 & 1293.

Jackpot: Rs 236. **Runner-up:** Rs 52.
Mini Jackpot: 187. **First Treble:** Rs 114.
Second Treble: Rs 52. TNN

Stuttering BFC seek turnaround

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

After a strong start to the Indian Super League season, Bengaluru FC have seen their momentum stall in recent weeks. Since their victory over FC Goa in early April, Bengaluru FC have failed to register a win in their last three matches, dropping valuable points at a crucial juncture of the campaign. They will be keen to turn things around in the final stretch as they prepare to face Odisha FC at the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Goa on Monday.

INDIAN SUPER LEAGUE

BFC head coach Pep Munoz, still searching for his first win in the ISL after taking over from Renedy Singh, will hope for three points against Odisha. "It's not going to be an easy game, but we're focused and ready to give our all on Monday," Munoz said. Bengaluru, who lie sixth on the table, will look for inspiration from their away record this season. They have three wins and a draw under their belt and would be keen to continue that trend for the remainder of the season.

GEARING UP: Pep Munoz

In order to get their best game flowing, they need their key players, including Rahul Bheke, Sunil Chhetri, and Ryan Williams, among others, to shine. They will, however, be without two players, with Nikhil Poojary and Ashqiue Kuruniyan ruled out due to muscular injuries.

Odisha, who lie on the 13th spot, have endured a poor season. Their only win came against NorthEast United FC in March, but since then, it has only gone downwards for them.

Sinner's Madrid magic

World number one Jannik Sinner dispatched Alexander Zverev 6-1, 6-2 on Sunday to win the Madrid Open for the first time.

The Italian claimed a record fifth consecutive Masters 1000 title and stretched his winning streak to 23 matches with a superb display in the Spanish capital. Only Roger Federer, Rafa Nadal and Novak Djokovic had managed to win four titles at this level in a row.

TENNIS

Sinner has been in impeccable form and broke world number three Zverev's first service game before consolidating for a 3-0 lead.

The Italian secured another break and eased into a 5-0 advantage on his serve. In the sixth game Zverev produced his first hold, but there was nothing the 29-year-old could do about Sinner's powerful serving.

AFP

CHAMPION: Jannik Sinner

A drop shot left Zverev scrambling before Sinner clinched the first set with an ace.

Sinner broke in the third game of the second set to tighten his grip on the title. Zverev showed more fight than in the first stanza but could not stop his opponent.

Sinner hammered down a forehand winner for another break to take a 5-2 lead and serve for the championship. The Italian sealed his triumph serving to love to wrap up a a sublime fortnight in Madrid. AFP

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